



**ПРОТИВО
СТОЯНИЯ**

СЕРГЕЙ КРЕМЛЁВ

КРЕМЛЕВСКИЙ ВИЗИТ ФЮРЕРА



Abstract

Stalin and Hitler never actually met. And the result was that second war of the Germans and Russians, which today - after the publication of new documents - can be considered the biggest misunderstanding in world history.

But Stalin and Hitler met on the pages of this book. However, it is not an "alternative" version of that ancient era. Almost the entire book examines the period before the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and immediately after it - the 39th and 40th years in strict documentary form ...

The idea of the meeting was in the air, Hitler spoke about it to his adjutant von Belov in the spring, and Ribbentrop to Stalin in the autumn of 1939. It was discussed in the correspondence between Ribbentrop and the Reich Ambassador in Moscow, Schulenburg, in the spring of 1940... Therefore, the virtual end of the book is only an illustration of how it could and should have been!

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SERGEY KREMLYOV

THE KREMLIN VISIT OF THE FUHRER

From the author

Dear readers! SOME

of you are already familiar with my books, and I am addressing someone for the first time ... And therefore, asking for forgiveness from those who know this, I would like to inform you that on the topic of Russian-German (specifically Russian-German, and not "Russian-German") and Soviet-German relations, the author has already published three books: "Russia and Germany: Play Off!", "Russia and Germany: Together or Separately?", "Russia and Germany:

The Path to the Pact" ... In all three, the following thoughts were held as key. In the 20th century, Russia could have one strategic partner, cooperation with which was most in line with its national interests -

Germany. Having no zones of serious conflicts, the two great peoples historically, economically, culturally and geopolitically complemented each other, which was extremely dangerous for the plans of the Anglo-Saxon (and in the future - supranational) world domination.

These plans could not be carried out without bringing the world political leaders of the United States. And such a bringing of the United States to the forefront of world politics was impossible without a great European war that exhausted the European powers, at the end of which the United States had to play the role of "defender of democracy" and "benefactor" of an exhausted Europe.

Not the confrontation between England and Germany, but the threat of the transition of industrial and economic leadership from the United States to a dynamically developing Germany, led to the First World War, organized by the efforts of the United States and

cosmopolitan circles in Europe. The union of Russia and Germany ruled out such a war. Therefore, everything was done to pit the two powers and push them in a bloody battle - which actually happened.

The same forces that organized the First World War, during the Paris "peace" conference in 1919, laid under

the European world new "time bombs" - "Versailles" system of "peace" treaties.

Among these "mines" were the transfer of the ethnically German Sudetenland to Czechoslovakia, and the "free city of Danzig" with the Danzig "corridor" to the sea for "remake" Poland, and the German Memel, "donated" to Lithuania, and a number of similar

provocations. Since a firm alliance of the now USSR and Germany still ruled out a long, exhausting war in Europe, everything was done to "separate" the two powers and two peoples again. Many have tried here - from the Trotskyists and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR Maxim Litvinov (Meer Wallach) to the secret "moles" of the West in the leadership of the Third Reich and Hitler's German National Socialist Workers' Party (NSDAP). However, America, the headquarters of the World Evil, and England, the junior partner of the USA, again had a decisive influence ...

SPEAKING about the Anglo-Saxons as an environment in which Evil has been cultivated for centuries, the author does not mean, of course, the peoples who gave the world Shakespeare and Newton, Mark Twain and Edison. By "Anglo-Saxons" the author means those powerful supranational elements of the world's owning minority, which have long been concentrated in the territories that provide them with the greatest security, that is, first in island England, and then in the overseas United States ...

However, the Golden Elite, parasitizing in the bodies of the English and American peoples, gradually corrupted the masses, instilling in them that hypocrisy and hypocrisy that are inseparable from any elite - except, of course, breeding cattle. In his

monograph Franklin Roosevelt. Man and politician. A New Reading" Nikolai Nikolaevich Yakovlev rightly noted that historically the United States derived unheard of benefits from wars in Europe and Asia and that this prompted the American bourgeoisie to incite other peoples to military conflicts ...

But if it is so - and it is so! - then can the conflicts in Europe (and in Asia too) be considered as something originally conditioned by the processes that took place in Europe? Wouldn't it be more correct to point to the primary source of unrest and enmity among peoples since the end of the 19th century, that is, to the USA?

After all, in order to push many countries to something contrary to their vital interests, it was necessary to do a lot of work, requiring a lot of money.

It was necessary to buy the press of entire states in the bud, and to buy as many influential citizens of these states as possible in the bud. And it was necessary,

again spending a lot of money and undertaking considerable efforts, to unite under transatlantic, supranational banners as many representatives of the elite layers of European powers as possible ... Layers that by their very nature are not inclined to patriotism, but gravitate towards cosmopolitanism. All this is not just a logical scheme for warmongers - all

this is how it was done...

It was done by the United States and, as the author calls it, by the Golden International... One could say differently: by the Golden Elite of the world.

The SOVIET-German Pact of 1939 became a serious hindrance to dark forces of various kinds, from the extreme right to the extreme left...

these forces have a chance...

Stalin, apparently, believed that the USSR was forced to agree to the Pact and therefore he did not regard it as a real turning point in the common history of the two peoples. He did not trust Germany as a possible sustainable partner.

Hitler, on the other hand, hesitated in choosing a further path ... And he also did not trust

Stalin. If Stalin invited Hitler to the Soviet Union and proved to him the expediency of an exclusively peaceful joint future, then today the world could have a completely different - meaningful and constructive - look, the essence of which would be partnership relations between Germany and Russia (as well as Japan, China), not an Anglo-Saxon dictate. Not a "conspiracy of dictators", but a completely

meaningful union of two great powers and peoples, cleared of mutual delusions - that's what could be the result of such a meeting.

The author is fully aware of the crucial importance of the classical thesis of Marxism about the primacy of economic factors in the history of mankind. However, the role of the individual in this story is clearly greater than the classics of Marxism imagined. This becomes especially clear when looking at the phenomenon of Stalin and Hitler - two authoritarian leaders who became both formal and informal leaders of two great peoples at a very crucial period in the development of Russia and Germany. It was their position that determined the national positions and actions at that time. And their position turned out to be ambivalent, which led to a catastrophe for Germany and Hitler in 1945, and for Russia and the Lenin-Stalin affair in the year 1991 ... By the way, when everything was already over (personally for the Reichs Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany Ribbentrop), Ribbentrop wrote in his dying memoirs:

“The enormous power and deployment of the strength of the Soviet Union logically raises the question: was Adolf Hitler, with his perception of events, right before history? Or was the path I was aiming for still possible in the long run?”

My opinion is this: clashes with Russia could have been to avoid, but this required concessions on our part.

The beginning of hostilities against Soviet Russia on June 22, 1941 was the end of the policy of compromise between the two empires for the longest period, initiated at my suggestion.

Here it should be noted that concessions were actually required on both sides, and on both sides they were not made ... However, Hitler hesitated in choosing the path, perhaps even more than Stalin ... Although Stalin did not want war either.

That Hitler hesitated can be clearly seen from his little-known letter to Mussolini dated June 21, 1941. It was published in the USSR in No. 5 of the small-circulation Military History Journal for 1965 and began like this: ***“Duce! I am writing this letter to you at a time when months of hard thinking, as well as eternal nervous waiting, ended with the acceptance of the most difficult thing in my life.***

life of a decision ... ”

If Stalin had introduced the factor of the "Kremlin visit of the Fuhrer" into these thoughts, everything could have gone differently ... Hitler really was not

I am sure whether he needs to fight the USSR if the USSR does not intend to fight Germany at a convenient moment for himself. This is clearly seen from the general mood and thoughts of the letter dated June 21, 1941. This can be seen from the analysis of the documents of the most decisive, 1940 - already a military year for Germany and still pre-war for the USSR ...

IT IS CONSIDERED that history does not tolerate the subjunctive mood. Accordingly, "notebook" historians consider history only as a collection of facts and information. However, if history is also considered as a comprehensive study of the dynamics of the human development process, undertaken on the basis of an analysis of a representative array of historical facts, then it becomes scientifically fruitful to find some key "branch point" in a given historical period. And on the basis of identifying and studying the trends that actually existed, but did not materialize in that period, to see how events would develop, what character the era would acquire if these trends were realized.

Let me remind you that "tendency" (from the Latin *tendere* - to direct, strive) is not only "the direction in which the development of a phenomenon takes place", but also "aspiration, inclination towards something" ... To strive for something does not mean it is necessary to achieve something, but... But it is useful to study the unrealized tendencies of the era with a strictly analytical, rather than opportunistic approach to them. How useful it is to ask questions: "Why did some trends not materialize and others did? What prevented the victory of healthy, rational aspirations? And **who** prevented this?"

If such questions are raised by a thoughtful researcher, then his work and its results will be quite scientifically correct and have quite scientific value. And not only scientific, but also social! After all, having understood what once prevented a healthy approach, one can also understand what prevents healthy aspirations from making way for today and

tomorrow. Among other things, to carry out such work, and, I hope, getting to know her is just fun!

The English researchers E. Reed and D. Fisher believed that Stalin had no other choice - except for the Pact - in the **specific** conditions of the military-political isolation of the USSR with

side of the Western world. However, in reality, the potential significance of the Pact was much more serious - **regardless of the prevailing reality**. This was well stated in the memorandum handed over by the German

Ambassador Schulenburg to the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Molotov a week before Reich Minister Ribbentrop's arrival in Moscow. Therefore, it is time for us in Russia to evaluate the Pact with Germany not as a "success",

"conspiracy" or "mistake", but as a right step on the path to historical common sense that the USSR and Germany have not yet completed. The enemies of Russia and Germany managed to set them off in 1941 just as they did in 1914. It is time for us and the Germans to realize this. And to realize it not

only in the name of establishing historical truth, but also in the name of the constructive historical perspectives of the two great peoples and the whole world. To this day, it is believed that the war between the USSR and the Third Reich

was inevitable that it followed logically from the reality of those years.

In one of the Internet discussions on August 17, 2004, science fiction writer Boris Strugatsky stated without hesitation that **"the whole course of events in 1933-1945 was such that it is very difficult to imagine any serious deviations from real history"** ... Further, the ex-humanist Strugatsky, now fond of unscrupulous exhumations of history, he reported that he **"repeatedly played this game (invented" alternatives ")", but never managed to get a" viable "virtual different from the real one."**

option, significantly

Well, if you do not live, but play "games", then the result can hardly be different. However, if you are looking for historical truth impartially, then as you deepen your analysis and involve the whole mass of facts, you are convinced of the opposite - it was quite possible and rational not to have a war between Russians and Germans at the turn of the 20th century, but to have their strategic partnership in the fight against those forces. , which in Nazi Germany was called plutocracy, and in the Soviet Union - World Capital ...

Why, then, did the brilliant science fiction writer (and, alas, the worthless citizen of the Fatherland) in this case not discover what befits him?

flight of fancy? Is it

not because a thoughtful analysis points as a warmonger not to Nazi Germany (and certainly not to the Soviet Union), but to the United States so beloved by the current "democrats" with their dual ideological center - Wall Street and Brighton Beach ? But the latter is so, by the way ... The historian Meltyukhov publishes the book "Stalin's Lost

Chance", which is most thorough in fact,

where the bibliography includes 1709 (one thousand seven hundred and nine) sources ... And - unlike Boris Natanovich Strugatsky - he still sees an alternative to what happened in reality . It (according to Meltyukhov)

lies in the fact that Stalin had the only chance to exclude the German invasion - a month earlier to attack himself ... This thesis is proved on half a thousand pages using many thousands of various digital data ...

At the same time, Meltyukhov asserts that both sides were striving for world domination (which is actually nonsense even in relation to Germany) and that therefore an alliance between them was allegedly impossible. And if Stalin had gone for it, he would have been forced to fight (according to Meltyukhov) for the interests of the Reich, only strengthening Hitler ...

Meltyukhov, it seems, is unaware that if the USSR, together with Germany, defeated England in 1942, then it would be a war of "little blood, a mighty blow" **on foreign** territory. That in this case, all the mighty comprehensive achievements of the first five-year plans would have been preserved and multiplied ... And this would have ruled out any attack on the USSR ... And the whole subsequent history of the world would not have

gone as idiotically as it did - along the path of disastrous Americanization, otherwise ... After Undermining the plans of the plutocratic Golden Elite and suppressing its power, the history of the planet Earth would follow the path of peace and creative, human-worthy creation...

Unfortunately, the work of diverse dark forces in the Western world, in Germany, in the USSR, as well as a number of mutual miscalculations by Hitler and Stalin, led the two powers and two peoples to war. And they brought...

Wilhelm Assarson, the former Swedish envoy in Moscow from 1940 to 1944, left an interesting testimony... Describing the diplomatic corps in Moscow in early 1941, he reports that in April the solemn signing of the Soviet-Yugoslav friendship pact attracted everyone's attention. According to the author of this book, Moscow's

move was the last and hard to explain mistake in a chain of mistakes that soon chained the two countries to the chariot of a senseless war between them. But from Assarson's memoirs, I learned that the famous adviser to the Moscow German embassy, Hilger, a native of Moscow, half Russian and married to a Russian, **also** found the Soviet Yugoslav agreement **incomprehensible**.

One can, of course, object that Hitler, they say, had to first be distracted by the suppression of Yugoslavia, and this led to the postponement of the invasion of the USSR to a later time and to the subsequent disruption of the blitzkrieg as a whole.

But, firstly, Hitler was forced to solve the "Yugoslav" problem, regardless of our position. Secondly, the reasonable policy of the USSR, **understandable** from the point of view of the primacy of the principle of preserving peace, could exclude a blitzkrieg against Soviet Russia as such! And the Strugatskys

and Meltyukhovs are afraid of admitting this fact like the devil incense. The black top hat of Uncle Sam and the yarmulkes of the financiers who prepared both the German-Soviet war and the Yeltsin coups of 1991 and 1993 come out very much from this fact ... In what

happened, there is, alas, the fault of the two leaders personally ... If at the end of 1940 they met in person (and both wanted this meeting and both understood its potential significance), then everything could go, I repeat, otherwise ... It didn't work out ...

Why? Why, already in extreme old age, Molotov admitted that Hitler wanted to come to us, but "they didn't let him in" ...

Who didn't let him

in? Yes, just those who needed a war between Russians and Germans in the name of US hegemony in Europe and in the world! And this is not about some direct bans on the Fuhrer, but about a systemic disruption of the possibility of

What were the provocations of Canaris, the "agent of influence" of the British, worth here! And only Canaris! In the book, the author only briefly touches on the work of pro-Western "moles" from the "anti-Hitler opposition"... But this work was far from episodic and limited in nature... And in Moscow, there were

enough "moles" not only in 1991, but also in the year 1940! Both they and

their "cartridges" vitally (or is it more appropriate to say "deadly"?) needed a war between Russia and Germany with each other. After all, if the Russians and Germans had avoided it and united against the Golden Elite of the world, then the United States (**by someone**) would not have risen through the bones of the peoples to world commanding heights, England would have retreated to their rightful, that is, fourth positions, and Germany would have strengthened himself as the leader of a new Europe friendly to the USSR. If Churchill's

cosmopolitan "England" were defeated, then yes, England would enter the orbit of the German "New Europe" ... But it would be more accurate to say that in this case England would enter the orbit of a truly English, national **policy**.

Just as in the United States, deprived of the opportunity to feed on the blood and tears of other peoples of the world, then healthy national forces could take over, capable, in collaboration with the rest, of a policy worthy of a humanity pursue an great industrial power.

In this case, Soviet Russia would receive what even Stolypin dreamed of as a condition for the greatness of Russia - a stable external peace that gives us the possibility of powerful all-round internal development. That's what he

deprived us - in my deep conviction - the failed "Kremlin visit of the Fuhrer" ... AND NOW I

would like to inform the reader of the following ... As in his previous books, the author sought in his work to combine the documentary nature of traditional monographs with a form that is not characteristic of traditional monographs, often far from a reasonable share journalism, and from the fascination ... But the history of mankind is not only instructive, but also excitingly interesting!

Having said this, the author emphasizes that everything described by him up to mid-November 1940 is strictly documentary in the truest sense of the word, that is, it corresponds to real documents of real history with minimal reliance on such dubious sources as memoirs.

Basically, when doing cross-analysis, I tried to use diplomatic correspondence. Being internal documents, closed, not intended for prying eyes, records of conversations, reports of ambassadors, instructions to them from foreign affairs departments, and so on, have, in my opinion, a very high level of correspondence to the truth. In other words, in the descriptions until

November 1940, before the chapter "August-October, Moscow time...", not a single fact is fictional (and not even contrived), not a single dialogue is fictional (although in some cases it is contrived)—most often I built them on the basis of the same diplomatic reports or such a unique source as the "Service Diary" of General Halder ... The latter source is so valuable and informative that you can write a novel using only it! From the chapter "August-October, Moscow time...", from conversations and

discussions in Moscow in August 1940 and beyond, the transition from documentary to partial fiction begins, considered by the author as a bridge – in turn – already to direct virtuality...

Although everything related to, for example, the situation around the Danube, Bulgaria, Romania, the Straits is documented ... Nevertheless, starting from this chapter, the author does not recommend the reader to uncritically use his text as an argument in possible discussions with someone about the problems and **facts** of **real** stories.

However, the author hopes that, as a rule, the reader will understand where the author still follows the real document, and where he introduces elements of fiction, or rather, conjecture ... It

should be emphasized that the circumstances and details of the prehistory and history of Molotov's autumn visit and "persons accompanying him" to Germany are also completely documented - the fruit of the author's analysis, and not the study of the sources, are only Stalin's conversations with his associates and his reflections.

And it is absolutely necessary to emphasize that all the Berlin dialogues - with the exception of the moment of the Fuhrer's invitation to Moscow, in the penultimate, "Molotov" chapter, are also basically **absolutely** documentary! Even the most, at first glance, unexpected.

In Berlin, my dear reader, on November 12 and 13, 1940, everything was as it is described in the book ... Naturally, the

last chapter is purely virtual. However - and the author is even more convinced of this after writing the book than before starting work on it - only a series of tragic misunderstandings did not make this chapter real either ... After all, Stalin and Hitler had serious objective prerequisites for the implementation of the idea of a personal meeting, which was worn in the air and came, as it turns out, to the minds of both of them ...

Such a meeting could change a lot ... If not everything ... Alas, today, sixty years after the end of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the Nazi invaders, bowing their heads to the blessed memory of the fallen and admiring their feat - now devalued wild, total betrayal " Russian "official and unofficial" establishment " - the author is forced to state with bitterness that this war could well not have happened ...

The Dneproges would not have been blown up ... In 1941 and 1942, Soviet Russia would not have lost several tens of thousands of industrial enterprises destroyed by its own hands, but would have put into operation several thousand new ones ...

Oleg Koshevoy and Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya would have successfully entered Moscow State University, would have graduated from it and would have become over time - oh, why not? - secretaries of the Central Committee ... In the beginning - the Central

Committee of the Komsomol, and then, you see, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks ... Yes, there might not have been a war. And so the second Great War of the Russians and Germans turned out to be the greatest misunderstanding in the entire world history and imposed the sinister Golden International on the entire further

course of this history ... And I wanted the misunderstanding to be overcome at least in this historical journalistic study of mine

on time ...

After all, even today we live in the power of misunderstandings.
Misunderstandings that are now vital for us, now living on planet Earth,
to overcome... ***June 2, 2005 Sergey***

Brezkun (Sergey

Kremlev)

Part I. 38th ... 39th ... 40th

*To the golden-haired
bibliographer, dear
wife Galina, under
whose peaceful dreams this book was written*

Chapter 1

Autumn of the League of Nations

On DECEMBER 25, 1933, the New York Times Moscow correspondent Walter (Walter) Duranty interviewed Stalin. The year was coming to an end, at the beginning of which Chancellor Hitler came to power in Germany, and at the end - on November 16 - diplomatic relations were established between the USSR and the USA ... Outside the windows of

Stalin's office, the Russian winter was already unfolding with might and main. And, although the country celebrated the New Year without much elegance, festivity shone on every Moscow snowflake. And the young spruce trees near the Kremlin wall, decorated with snow, no longer needed any additional decoration in order for the soul to become cheerful and freeze in the inevitable New Year's Eve expectation of something new, better, cherished ...

Walter Duranty was an enthusiastic and cheerful nature, had many acquaintances in Moscow, was glad to show the Russian capital to visiting compatriots, often got annoyed, immediately switched to funny gossip, pounded on the new Moscow asphalt with his favorite heavy stick, but he was interested in Soviet Russia and, in in general, not bad. Stalin appreciated this. His

conversation with

Duranty immediately took on the character that was most familiar to the Yankees - they talked about trade ... Duranty skillfully asked, Stalin answered skillfully.

In fact, Duranty began like this:

"Mr. Stalin, would you agree to convey a New Year's message to the American people through my newspaper?" Stalin

glanced at his interlocutor, smiled with only his eyes, and shortly answered:

- No.

"But..." Duranty tried to protest, "I..." Stalin interrupted with a gesture of his hand

and explained: "Kalinin has already done that." And I can't interfere with it prerogatives...

KALININ addressed the Americans on November 20, in connection with the establishment of diplomatic relations, and Duranty might have noticed that a lot of time has passed since that moment - more than a month, and the New Year is a convenient occasion for Stalin's personal appeal. However, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) looked firmly and with all his appearance made it clear that he is the head of the party, who does not deny his own and national leadership, in matters of foreign policy protocol he cannot run ahead of the official head of state - the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin ...

Duranty understood and did not insist anymore, and Stalin, smoothing the pause, explained:

“Personally, I am certainly pleased with the resumption of relations between the USA and the USSR as an act of enormous significance ... Politically, this raises the chances for strengthening peace, economically, it raises questions on a business basis and opens the way for mutual cooperation ...

Duranty could not escape the fact that Stalin used the expression "resumption of relations" and not "establishment" of them ... Well, this Russian Georgian was, as always, accurate and right ... People's Commissar Litvinov and President Roosevelt only restored those ties that in 1918 President Wilson tore it up... On March 11 of this past year, Wilson sent a message to the Fourth

Extraordinary Congress of Soviets expressing readiness to support the sovereignty and independence of the Russian Republic. “The people of the United States,” he wrote, “with all their hearts sympathize with the Russian people in their desire ... to become the arbiter of their own destiny” ... And in the spring of that year, America was actively preparing

civil war in Russia and their own intervention there ... The intervention failed, the Civil War ended. In July 2020, Russia, through the mouth of the

People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR Chicherin, suggested that Washington conclude political, trade and economic agreements on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. President Woodrow Wilson acted like Admiral Horatio

Nelson. In delicate situations, he put a spyglass to a gouged eye and shrugged his shoulders - they say, nothing is visible ...

In December 1923, the same Chicherin, already as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, proposed to the new President Calvin Coolidge to settle all disputes and restore normal relations. Coolidge acted no more wisely than his predecessor Woodrow... ALL THIS Duranty knew

very well, because he had lived in Moscow since the twenties, and met Stalin not for the first time. And so he turned the conversation to loans, at the same time asking - what is the situation in the USSR with gold mining? The Yankee's hint was

understandable - the business soil, which the Soviet leader mentioned, is America's soil, reinforced with gold staples. So loans are loans, but do Russians have anything to pay for them? Stalin, however, was not embarrassed by this question, and he readily said: - We have many

gold-bearing regions, and they are developing rapidly. Our production has already doubled the production of tsarist times ... Stalin stopped and also finished with a clear hint: - We could quadruple gold

production in a short time if we had more dredges and other machines ... Now the owner of the Kremlin

office looked at Duranty searchingly - they say, If you want, gentlemen of the Yankees, to have Russian gold, help us get it. We will extract it for ourselves, but we will also pay you honestly ... Duranty, however, preferred to clarify:

- Let's say you have a willingness to pay, but how are you with solvency?

"We do not take on obligations that we cannot pay," Stalin remarked even mildly. "Look at our economic relations with Germany... The conversation flowed calmly, the interlocutors

moved from loans to Roosevelt's assessment, from Roosevelt to Japan, from Japan to England... And at the end of the conversation, the American casually asked:

Is your position always exclusively negative in about the League of

Nations? Stalin looked at Duranty carefully and replied:

- No, not always and not under all conditions ...

Duranty listened carefully, and this was quite understandable ... The LEAGUE OF NATIONS was one of the results of the Paris Peace (if it can be called peaceful) Conference of 1919 of

the year. It is believed that the idea of the League was put forward by Woodrow Wilson in 1918, but the idea of an international organization in the name of peace has been in Europe almost from the

very beginning of the First World War. In England, in 1915, the "British League of Nations Society" appeared, and even earlier, in 1914, the "Union of Democratic Control" arose there. In France, the "Committee of the League of Nations" labored in the field of the future bliss of mankind, and in the United States it was created nothing more and nothing less than the "League for the Protection of Peace" ... The Yankees - like natural hypocrites - have always loved fancy names.

Someone sincerely dreamed of a common governing body for the cooperation of peoples, wishing the people well. However, as usual, lofty pacifist dreams have become a cover for the vile and cunning calculations of the Golden International of the world's propertied elite.

That League of Nations, which later took shape in Paris, Wilson mentioned in the last of his famous "Fourteen Points" of his message to the US Congress on January 8, 1918. This paragraph read: ***"An association of nations must be formed on the basis of special statutes in order to create a mutual guarantee of the political independence and territorial integrity of both large and small states."*** And on April 28, 1919, such an association was

proclaimed. The Charter of the League of Nations was approved, and it became an integral part of the Versailles "peace" treaty of the Powers of Concord (that is, the Entente) with Germany, and also entered into the Saint-Germain, Trianon, Neuilly and Sevres treaties ... Alas, loud-sounding names were actually worth little . And, although

they were followed by the word "peaceful," these "peaceful" treaties served the goals of the United States, that is, the goals of future wars. The Saint-Germain "peace" treaty of 1919 was concluded by

the Entente with the German remnant of the Austro-Hungarian Empire - Austria and, among other things, gave the Sudeten Germans under the rule

remake "Czechoslovakia", but forbade the Austrian Germans to reunite with the German Germans. The Trianon "peace" treaty of

1920 established a new

the status and borders of the second remnant of the "patchwork" empire - Hungary.

The Neuilly "peace" treaty of 1919 was concluded by the Entente on the outskirts of Paris, Neuilly-sur-Seine, with Germany's unsuccessful ally, tsarist Bulgaria. He gave the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (since 1929 became Yugoslavia), 4 districts on the western border of Bulgaria, inhabited by Bulgarians. And the friendship of the Serbs with the Bulgarians did not strengthen. The Sevres "peace" treaty of 1920 was concluded between the

"major allied powers" - Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, as well as Dashnak Armenia, Belgium, Greece, Poland. Portugal, Romania, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Hejaz (since 1932 - Saudi Arabia) and Czechoslovakia, on the one hand, and the sultan government of Turkey's German ally, on the other ... This agreement, like one of its participants, Armenia Dashnaks, — turned out to be a short-lived creation. But it is interesting that the Turkish army, according to it, should not exceed 50 thousand soldiers and officers, including

35 thousand gendarmes. No country in the world has known such a ratio of the country's defenders and its punishers (except that Putin's Russia is moving towards it). And this option was prescribed to the defeated "totalitarian" Turkey by the "democratic" victorious countries ... Well, yes ... Members of the League of Nations (31 states that took part in the war on the side of the winners and 13 did not take part at all) pledged to help each other in the event of an attack, to observe treaties and norms of international law, to ensure cooperation, justice and openness of international relations (that is - ha!

- to use

only open diplomacy). However, already on March 29, 1920, Lenin, in a speech at the opening of the IX Congress of the RCP (b), not without reason, said: "This notorious "League of Nations", which tried to distribute the rights to govern states, divide the world, this notorious union turned out to be a poof" ...

In the same year, he also said this: "The League of Nations is an alliance only on paper, but in reality it is a group of predatory animals that only fight and do not trust each other at all."

It was difficult to argue with such an assessment, although Lenin, with his characteristic polemical enthusiasm, thickened, if not colors, then expressions. Outwardly, everything looked decent ... No predatory animals and fights ... Moreover, the venerable and peaceful Geneva became the headquarters of the League, since Switzerland was also admitted there, but taking into account its "exceptional position" - permanent neutrality.

From the windows of the huge multi-storey building of the League of Nations, there was a beautiful view of Geneva and its environs. In the distance, the top of Mont Blanc was white; closer, Lake Geneva was blue. And on its banks a stormy imitation of "world political life" was seething...

The charter (statute, pact, "covenant") of the League consisted of 26 articles and determined that its bodies were the Assembly (Assembly) and the Council, which has a permanent Secretariat of 14 sections headed by the Secretary General (the first Secretary General was the Englishman Eric Drummond).

As autonomous organizations under the League, there were (yes!), the Permanent Court of International Justice, the International Labor Office, and something else on trifles (the Red Cross, etc.) ... As a result, there

were more foreigners among the inhabitants of Geneva than Swiss. Near the natural Lake Geneva, the "sea" of international officials swayed every day, and this was very convenient for the intelligence services of the whole world. It was easier to get information here, and easier to get lost. The convenience of this state of affairs was fully appreciated by the Hungarian Shandor Rado, a career intelligence officer of the Red Army Intelligence Agency. He was an excellent cartographer, which is why the Center recommended him to open a cartographic bureau in Geneva.

Geopress Rado prospered, up-to-date maps and diagrams covering political and geographical events were in great demand. They were ordered by newspapers and ministries, ordered by the apparatus of the League of Nations, and Rado himself was accredited to its press department and even had his own mailbox there.

It was perhaps the unwitting services of Soviet intelligence that limited the benefits for the USSR from the existence of this world in the world.

"authoritative international organization" ...

The League turned out to be NO MORE useful for bourgeois Europe. The First World War for the first time betrayed Europe to America with giblets. And yet it was believed that America had nothing to do with the League of Nations - after all, it had not even "signed" the Treaty of Versailles.

Therefore, it was believed that the Anglo-French were in charge of everything in the League, and this was partly true if it was clarified that the Yankees were in charge of the Anglo-French after the world war ...

Initially, the Council of the League as permanent members included Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. In 1926, after the signing of the Locarno Accords, which loosened the "Versailles" noose on the throat of Germany, she also entered the League, also becoming a permanent member of the Council.

In 1933, the United States deigned to "join" (in fact, to come out from behind the scenes to the fore) the League, but at the same time Germany and Japan left the League. Hitler

slammed the door after his proposal to the Anglo-French to reduce the armed forces to approximately German levels was refused, on the condition that Germany refuse to build up its own armed forces.

Japan did not want to listen to idle speeches addressed to her anymore, because her strengthening more and more irritated all her former "allies" in the First World War, except for Italy. And one more thing...

Throughout its history, the League has been an organization organically **anti-Soviet** - in Geneva they have always **breathed the thick fumes** of anti-Sovietism, because Washington has breathed them. Neither the departure of the Germans nor the departure of the Japanese changed this atmosphere. Naturally, the "coming" to the League of America did not change it either. As well as - I will say this, looking ahead - the arrival of the

USSR itself there. These were the cases by that December day of 1933, when Duranty appeared in Stalin's Kremlin office and asked his question ... It was, of

course, ASKED for a reason. It was no accident that in the second half of 1933 the United States finally officially recognized the Soviet Union ... Dear reader!

The author is not yet **leading** his story in the full sense of the word, because the course of events and,

accordingly, the course of the story about them has so far been set not by the author, but by the real history of the second half of the 20th century.

However, do we truly understand the essence of those events, have they been and are being explained to us correctly? Why did the Yankees agree to normalize relations with Russia in 1933, and not in 1932, in 1931? Is it possible that a year, two, three, and even five years before recognition, something prevented them from doing what had already been done by almost the whole world?

I don't think... So what's the matter? In the "broad struggle of the American public"? Hardly! Anti-Sovietism in the US has traditionally been stronger than love for the Soviets. Moreover, the economic crisis, which sometimes painted the States in very red colors, was already on the wane in domestic political terms. America was on the New Deal of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Maybe US capital has decided to actively rush to the Russian markets? So no, the restoration of diplomatic relations did not bring much revival in economic relations. Rather, on the contrary. Where was the dog

buried? And was it the dog? I

will say right away that it

was not about her, but about her long-standing wild ancestor - if you know that the favorite party pseudonym of the Reich Chancellor of Germany Adolf Hitler was "Wolf" - "wolf" ... Yes, at the beginning of

1933, a powerful Wolf stood at the head of Germany, and the overseas republican-democratic Donkey with an Elephant did not smile at such a development of events when the German Wolf would find a common interest with the Russian Bear ... Similar possible events had to be anticipated. I'll say more about this, but

now I'll just note that, perhaps, it was the fear of improving Soviet-German relations that became the main reason for the US movement towards the formal normalization of Soviet-American relations ... The Washington "triumph" of People's Commissar Litvinov in November 1933 was programmed by the Fuhrer's Berlin triumph January 30, 1933 and... And - his quick constructive steps towards Soviet Russia... They were alarmed about

this in Europe too. And not the "increased authority of the USSR", but the desire to tear it away

from Germany suddenly changed

attitude towards us also in the League of Nations. They began to talk about the lack of Russia in the "community of nations". The

United States, having not yet joined the League itself, has already begun to draw us into it - in order to create another opportunity to harm

Russia and Germany. Duranty's question was clearly with a "double bottom" ... STALIN, in general, understood this, but at that time he still counted very much on the common sense of Roosevelt and business Americans. Official relations with the United States have just improved, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Litvinov recently returned from Washington, where diplomatic relations between the two neighbors across the Bering

Strait were finally restored. As for the Germans, Stalin was then still very much under the influence of Litvinov. And he did not tolerate the Germans, but he was very

attached to the Anglo-Saxons and the French. However, regardless of the influence of the "parochial" People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Stalin very much, I repeat, hoped for the development of trade with America. Therefore, Duranty had to answer carefully ...

"Perhaps you do not quite understand us, Mr. Duranty," Stalin began calmly. - We are not part of the League, Germany and Japan left it ... Stalin thought about it ... Then he repeated:

- Yes, they left Again he thought, smiled caustically: - But maybe that's why the League can become a kind of brake on the war. And if the League can turn out to be at least a kind of bump on the way to it, then we are not against the League ...

"And if..." began Duranty inquiringly, but Stalin anticipated the question and finished:

- If this is the course of historical events, then it is possible that we will support the League of Nations, despite its colossal flaws.

The consequences of this conversation became apparent nine months later - on September 15, 1934, thirty member states of the League of Nations turned to the USSR with a proposal to join their circle. And on September

18, the USSR became a member of the League and a permanent member of its Council ...

Stalin's HOPES were both justified and not justified... The tribune of the League of Nations really became a kind of "hillock", but not on the road to war. Alas, it became just a "bump" with which the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR Litvinov began to develop the ideas of "collective security" with might and main ...

The direction of this idea was quite definite - against Germans.

And on this, dear reader, we need to dwell in more detail ... Anyone who is familiar with the "Russian-German triad" of the author's books "Russia and Germany: Set Off!", "Russia and Germany: Together or Separately?" and "Russia and Germany: The Path to the Pact," knows that there is a lot said about the stupidity of the Russian-German enmity and how diligently our common enemies inflamed it.

Here I will only repeat that the right policy for the USSR would be as good relations with Germany - even Nazi - as they were at all possible ... But they were still possible! There were many reasons for this - historical, geopolitical, and civilizational. But it

was enough to remember one thing - economic, in order to be friends with the Germans and cherish this friendship. Yes, to cherish, because both before the Nazis came to power and after that, Germany was our largest trade and economic partner. It was Germany,

including Nazi Germany, that supplied the Soviet Union with the material base for the creation of a large heavy and machine-building industry, without which there could be no question

of any successful five-year plans in the USSR ... So, there could be no question of economic

independence and external military security of Russia.

Hitler immediately made it clear to us that, being a tough and cruel anti-communist inside Germany and in Europe, he was ready to reckon with political reality and that he did not intend to be a blind anti-Soviet. Already in the very first months of his chancellorship, he openly said this in public speeches, emphasized this in a confidential conversation with the Soviet plenipotentiary Khinchuk in the spring of 1933, and most importantly ...

The main thing is that in the same spring he defiantly ratified the protocol of 1931 to the Berlin Soviet-German Treaty of 1926 on non-aggression and neutrality. This protocol

was signed on June 24, 1931, and extended the 1926 Treaty for an indefinite period so that each of the parties had the right to denounce it with a year's notice at any time. But not earlier than June 30, 1933. Since the summer of 1931, three "Weimar" chancellors "failed"

to ratify the protocol: Brüning, von Papen and von Schleicher. But the Nazi Chancellor Hitler not only did not terminate the peace treaty with Soviet Russia - which he could do if he wished already on July 1, 1933, but extended it indefinitely ... The chronology here is as follows ... On January 30, 1933, German President

Hindenburg appoints

Hitler Reich Chancellor.

On February 27, the Reichstag building is on fire, set on fire at the suggestion of either the Nazi Goering or the international oil magnate Deterding. The second is more likely, because the disruption of German-Soviet oil cooperation was a matter of life for Deterding ...

On March 5, in the elections to the Reichstag, the German National the Socialist Workers' Party wins a majority of 288 seats. On March 24, the "Law for the Protection of the Reich and the

People" was adopted. On April 1, an all-German boycott of shops and businesses owned by Jews was carried

out. And on April 13, the Soviet-German Protocol of 1931 to the Treaty 1926 signed by Hitler and ratified by the Reichstag. On May 4, 1933, it was ratified by the Central Executive

Committee of the USSR. At this point, President Roosevelt had to urgently save the situation and insert the first thorn in the Russian ... chest. On May 16, he officially sends a message to the Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Kalinin. Formally, Roosevelt addresses the USSR as one of the participants in the World Economic Conference and the Conference on Arms Reduction and Limitation. He sends the same messages to other

countries ... But there

is a "but" here ... The same, but not the same ... The President of the United States for the first time turned to the USSR officially, officially recognizing the exist

planet Earth is a state with that name.

And on November 16, 1933, he established official interstate relations with him. This is how Soviet

Russia entered the anti-German League of Nations. By the way, an integral part of the Treaty of 1926 was Germany's obligation that, in the event of its entry into the League of Nations, it would not consider it obligatory for itself to participate in the League's sanctions, if any were taken against the USSR. It was in 1926, when Germany was

preparing to accept the Locarno agreements and it really should have been accepted into the League, where the path of the USSR was then tightly closed.

But in 1934, with the entry into the League of the Soviet Union prepared by Litvinov, we did not undertake such obligations towards Germany ... Of course! Litvinov's policy

towards Germany was carried out with exactly the opposite.

If we take all this into account, then we can say that, while talking in the League of Nations about "collective security" and almost openly showing the devil to Berlin, Litvinov committed both official and state crimes.

But the small-town native of Meer - "Maxim Maksimovich" Wallach - Litvinov was always inclined to love France, and God himself ordered him to love England, for Maxim Maksimovich had long been married to an Englishwoman (more precisely, the granddaughter of Jewish immigrants from Hungary to England)

Ivy ... Stalin in at that time he could not even devote himself to external affairs a small part of those forces that were taken away from him by internal affairs.

And Litvinov "croaked" from his European "bumps" in Geneva and Paris at the top of his lungs. Fortunately, they listened to him there with visible attention, although in reality no one put him in a

penny ... They chatted in the League, and political affairs went on as usual. Litvinov strove to present himself almost as an oracle European politics and now and then skated at the session of the League ...

However, the League, having never experienced spring flowering, all more withered on its rotten "Versailles" root ...

And THAT in Europe has long been known to everyone who had the courage not to close their eyes to the obvious, but to look at the situation at least from the corner of their eye ...

A big capitalist, not alien to political literature, the repeated conservative British minister Leopold Emery already in 1936 declared in a narrow circle: "The League has collapsed" ...

To the question: "Why did this happen?" Emery, like a natural hypocrite, with all the sincerity of a born hypocrite-oligarch he answered:

— Oh, the reason is in the idealism of her sincere but misguided enthusiasts...

But he himself dejectedly

admitted: "Nominally, the League exists, but in reality the powers each act at their own discretion and are themselves involved in Spanish, Austrian and Czechoslovak affairs ... "Spanish Affairs" is a civil war in Spain,

this is the League Committee on non-intervention ... The name of the Committee it was, of course, mocking - it

was impossible not to interfere in Spanish affairs for the elite members of the League, that is, for England, France and the USA. It was really **their** business, because in Spain there were

their capitals were placed , **their** firms and companies were operating ...

For Germany that left the League and a member of the League of Italy, these were also their affairs, already because the English Gibraltar at the tip of the Iberian Peninsula was the cause of a constant headache both in Berlin and in Rome ... The USSR could not get anything

worthwhile in Spain. Even if the republican government had won there (however, from the very beginning it was doomed to defeat by virtue of internal contradictions), our positions there would hardly have been strong. After all, even the Republicans were not anti-capitalists. This means that the power of capital in Spain would be preserved. And the capital in Spain was controlled primarily by the Anglo-Saxons ...

It was even more stupid for the USSR to get into the affairs of Czechoslovakia (or rather - Czech-German).

"Czechoslovak" affairs are the Sudetenland.

The Sudetenland is a German region. And Czechoslovakia is one of the ugly creations of Versailles.

Ugly already because there are no others in Versailles produced.

Ugly, and because Versailles "slaughtered" three and a half million ethnic Germans who were formerly citizens of Austria-Hungary to the seven million people, incapable of effective (that is, able to protect themselves) statehood, that is, to the Czechs. After the First World War, the "patchwork" Vienna monarchy

collapsed ... The peoples who inhabited it received, it seems, the right to self-determination ... The Austrian Germans unanimously wanted to reunite with

German Germans in a single state.

As we know, they were rudely denied this. A separate Austrian Republic arose, and the Sudeten Germans, who lived along the border of Austria-Hungary with Germany, were stuffed into "Czechoslovakia" ...

In 1934, the 61st volume of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia was published (it was published in a "counter" way - from the beginning and from the end of the alphabet, which explained such a large volume number). On the insert between pages 480 and 481 there was placed a schematic ethnographic map of Czechoslovakia ... The areas of residence of the "Czechoslovaks" people, discovered in Versailles and previously unknown to ethnographers, surrounded by an almost continuous strip within the perimeter of the borders of Czechoslovakia zones with a German population.

There were approximately 6.3 million Chekhovs in a country of 14 million, Slovaks - 2.5 million (and 745 thousand Magyars, 462 thousand Ukrainians in the Carpathians, and even 181 thousand Jews and 75 thousand

Poles). And the Germans - 3,123,431 people according to the 1930 census! And the Germans occupied the second largest number after the Czechs in the country, which was called not "Czecho-Germany", but "Czecho-Slovakia" ...

N-

yes! The "ruling nation" - the Czechs - behaved arrogantly and stupidly towards the Germans. The time has come, the Reich has grown stronger and gained steel muscles. Hitler said that he would solve the Sudeten problem one way or another - not by

peace, but by war ... On September 29, 1938, Germany, England, France and Italy concluded an agreement in Munich "regarding the cession of the Sudetenland to the

German region" ... The Czechs ceded the Sudetenland. However, no one agreed with them. They were simply prescribed - from Berlin, from London and

Paris, and also (very, very behind the scenes) from Washington.

I wrote about this whole ugly story in detail in my book "Russia and Germany: The Path to the Pact" ... But Litvinov did everything to involve both the Red Army and the entire Soviet people in it ... I will talk about this a little later. "Austrian" affairs are the

Anschluss (that is, the accession) of Austria to Germany in March 1938. Litvinov went out of his way, claiming that

Hitler committed aggression and annexed Austria, but the Austrian Germans threw bouquets, not grenades, into the German Wehrmacht, which entered the territory of Austria ... There was nothing surprising in that - after all, the idea

of the Anschluss was not born in Hitler's head (native Austrian), and in the hearts of the Austrian nationalist Germans back in the eighties of the nineteenth century.

WHERE the Soviet Union did not meddle with Litvinov's "submission", becoming a member of the League ... It got to the

tragicomic ... In the 35th year, Italy invades

Ethiopia ... Aggression is obvious, and aggression is cruel, purely imperialistic, clearly self-serving ... The Ethiopian

Negus emperor Haile Selassie I (by the way, far from being a democrat and not a fighter for the rights and freedoms of his subjects, but a big banker) appealed for help both at secular receptions in his honor and from the rostrum of the League of Nations.

By that time, Italy had already agreed on controversial colonial issues with France, having concluded the Pact of Rome with it in 1935. Mussolini had no problems with England, with the States either. Only the USSR, which did not even

have diplomatic relations with Ethiopia, again through the efforts of Litvinov, verbally supported Ethiopia. On the other hand, he ruined real, good and beneficial relations with Italy for us. But it was so - pranks compared to the fact that Litvin's policy

could lead us to war over the Czechs with the Germans. And even to war with all of Europe, the security of which Litvinov was so worried about. The reason here could be all the same Sudetenland.

By September 1938, Hitler had already realized that the Anglo-French leaders, because of the Czechs, would not only fight with him, but would not even quarrel. On September 15, he began negotiations with the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and conducted them until

September 22. Against such a political background, on September 21, at the plenum of the League of Nations,

Litvinov declared: "When, a few days before my departure for Geneva, the French government turned to us with a request about our position in the event of an attack on Czechoslovakia, I gave on behalf of my government a completely clear and an unequivocal answer, namely: we intend to fulfill our obligations and, together with France, to help Czechoslovakia in the ways available to us ...

Only the innate historical cowardice of the Czechs saved us from a war for the interests of anyone - the USA, England, France, but not Russia ...

The Munich Agreement was meanwhile signed - without consultation within the walls of the League of Nations. And without consultations with the USSR. We were ignored in Munich in the same way that the League of Nations was ignored.

They chatted in the

LEAGUE... But in life, in the words of the Anglo-Saxon Emery, "the powers each acted at their own discretion." The correct thing in this

judgment was that although not every power acted at its own discretion, not a single power (except for such a specific "power" as Litvinov's People's Commissariat) acted or tried to act within the framework of the League of Nations.

For the USSR in this situation it would be the smartest thing to do a lean mine in case of a bad game and to remain silent, to restrain.

But for Litvinov, any liquid he spewed out was God's dew ... And literally the next day after,

in general, the well-deserved Munich slap in the face, Litvinov spoke at a session of the League of Nations - now in defense of China. China - unlike Ethiopia - we helped in earnest. And this help was

reasonable. Although Chiang Kai-shek China was a "cauldron" where a "brew" that was not very pleasant for us was brewed, our help, firstly, provided us, although fragile, but still rears in

far east affairs...

After all, on our planes and tanks, the Chinese fought against the Japanese. And by this, at least to some extent, they reduced the chances of Japanese aggression against us. Secondly,

our assistance to China worked for the future. After all, in China, tens of millions of people preferred red is not only on Chinese lanterns, but also in politics.

So speaking in support of China in itself was quite acceptable ... But his style was very typical and

betrayed Litvinov with his head how ... Well, he betrayed him as a talker, dear reader! Judge for yourself...

However, at first it would be necessary to clarify something... On September 30, 1938, the Council of the League considered the report of the Advisory Committee for the Far East on Japan's aggression against China. The fact

that Japan violates its obligations under the Treaty of 9 States of 1922 and the Paris Pact of August 27, 1928, the report did not deny ... The Treaty of 9 States was concluded at the

Washington Conference (the author spoke in detail about this in his book "Dear Unfulfilled Power") .

The Paris Pact of 1928, also called by the names of its formal initiators, French Foreign Minister Briand and US Secretary of State Kellogg, proclaimed the rejection of war as an instrument of national policy ... It was, of course, a cheap farce, but it would be more more stupid

than joining him. Therefore, the Briand-Kellogg Pact was signed by almost the entire world, including the USSR.

And almost the whole world spat on him ... And above all - Briand themselves with Kellogg.

It was to this piece of paper, worthless in the world of military profits, that the report of the League referred. But he did not propose any measures to counter Japanese aggression. The representative

of China, after listening to him, said: - This report does not satisfy my government at all. I regret that the Council was unable to organize concerted action by the members of the League in accordance with paragraph sixteen of the Charter of the League.

Then an Englishman, a Frenchman, a Belgian spoke ... The essence of their speeches could be conveyed not even with a couple of words, but with a gesture - politely

outstretched hands ... But then Maxim Maksimovich approached the microphone

and immediately "took the bull by the horns": - I want to assure the representative of China in our sympathy and understanding of his dissatisfaction with the report submitted to us. Aggression cannot be restrained and the aggressors cannot be stopped by such reports. The fact that we have to confine ourselves to such reports is even more regrettable at the present moment, when so much is being done outside the League to encourage aggression and ensure the success of the aggressors ...

Litvinov flashed his glasses triumphantly and finished: "My government would be ready to participate in the coordination of collective measures, but since other governments do not find it possible for themselves, we have to vote for this one." report.

And Meer - Maxim Ballakh - Litvinov passed off such a transfusion from empty to empty as an active foreign policy ... He did not even defend China in this speech, but he immediately bit everyone. England,

France and Italy - although without naming them - were accused of encouraging aggression, and Germany of aggression. He already honored the Germans with aggressors about the Anschluss, and now, even after Munich, he did not forget to

prick. It was for nothing that the right of nations to self-determination triumphed in Munich, which Litvinov himself quietly recognized even before Munich. And as he admitted - in a conversation with the German ambassador Schulenburg in August 1938!

Of course, there was no question of any line to smooth misunderstandings and conflicts between the USSR and Germany, between the USSR and Japan under such a people's commissar ... For

many years, Litvinov forgave the Anglo-French everything that was not forgiven by any self-respecting power. But any German "mote" in his own eye he passed off as a heavy log ...

And our relations with Germany by the end of 1938 were just the way London, Paris, Warsaw and, of course, Washington would like to see them...

That is, nasty and hostile ... And it was not a matter of one difference in ideologies ... Enmity of Russia and Germany was needed by those who needed a new world war.

And in general, they - who are both safe on the other side of the ocean, and on this one, but always having the opportunity to go **there**, to safety - needed enmity in Europe ... No wonder the

ambassador of Nazi Germany in bourgeois Britain, von Dirksen, in his regular political report to the Ministry Foreign Affairs wrote: ***"The personality of Chamberlain serves as a certain guarantee that the policy of England will not be transferred into the hands of unscrupulous adventurers" ...***

And there were plenty of unscrupulous Atlanticist adventurers who saw their "historical homeland" in the States and neglected the interests of England on the British Isle. Suffice it to mention the well-known Winston Churchill. I will say it again and again...

British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain can hardly be classified as an outstanding statesman. But he had the undoubted merit that, in the final analysis, he loved England at least as much as the income from his military enterprises. He could have acted short-sightedly, but he could hardly have acted adventurously, neglecting the interests of England ... And that is why the policy of

England, very influential in it (but by no means patriotic) forces, was preparing to transfer into the hands of just those unscrupulous adventurers, the first of whom was Sir Winston - then smiling radiantly, then frowning picturesquely... EVEN after Munich, Litvinov tried to

"cheer up" the Czechs - completely demoralized (if one could speak of the morality of the Czech ruling elite). But the Czech General Husarek bluntly and without a shadow of shame once again admitted that the Czechs are principled, convinced cowards. - Will you resist? our plenipotentiary

asked him directly
in Prague Aleksandrovsky on October 1, 1938.

Husarek's answer is worthy of being quoted in all honest history textbooks that have not yet been written: -

If Czechoslovakia resists today and a war starts because of this, then it will immediately turn into a war of the USSR from all over.

Europe. It is possible that the USSR will win, but Czechoslovakia will be swept away one way or another and will be deleted from the map of Europe ...

Reader! The Czechs created mighty fortifications on the border with Germany. Having occupied them without a fight, the Germans were horrified ... If they had to storm them, then another question is how it would all end.

The USSR, confused by Litvinov, despising its own interests, was ready to support the Czechs with military force. This is a plus to the fact that the Czechs had themselves.

And with this alignment of forces, clearly in their favor, they chickened out!

Having the opportunity to fight the Germans together with us, they capitulated not only without a fight, but even without indignation. They listened to what they were rudely, mockingly ordered by those Anglo-French "Europas" to whom the Czechs licked their heels, only a little less faithfully than they licked the heels of the Yankees ...

They licked and didn't even get indignant... However, can lackeys be indignant? The

same Husarek only timidly asked Chamberlain: "Why did you suggest mobilization to us and publicly declared that England and France, together with the USSR, would oppose Germany if Hitler used force to resolve the Sudeten question?" Chamberlain replied cynically: "Did you take all this

seriously?" It was just a maneuver to put pressure on Hitler! In Munich, the Czechs also received an ultimatum from the Poles. These - under the "Munich" guise - demanded the Teshinsky district (and they got it) ... The Czech representatives in Munich rushed to Chamberlain. That

shrugged...

They trudged to the French premier Daladier... Daladier, nicknamed by his compatriots the "bull of Vaucluse", was categorical: - Agree and fulfill! The completely cowardly Czechs, already

without orders and prompts, thought about whether it was not necessary to prevent the possibility of an ultimatum now by the Hungarians and themselves offer Hungary the cession of certain sections of the territory.

It's not even cowardice
anymore. This is pathology,
cretinism... The Czechs had an army that was essentially not
inferior to the Wehrmacht at that time
in terms of numbers and weapons. The Czechs had a powerful
military industry - some Skoda
tank factories were worth something! I repeat, they built
impenetrable reinforced concrete forts on
the Czech-German border ... So why did they
build their fortifications at all? Why were they armed? To their arms
strengthen Hitler (as it actually happened)? And why do we
need to contact them? Why did Litvinov
actually misinform Stalin about the situation and mood in
Czechoslovakia? Here is such a detail...

On the morning of September 30, 1938, when the terms of the
Munich Agreement became known in London, our plenipotentiary Ivan
Maisky went to the Czech embassy to comfort Ambassador Masaryk.
Why it

was necessary for the Soviet plenipotentiary to go to the Czechs,
and not vice versa, I can't understand. But for the style of the Litvinov
NKID, such inconsistencies were actually the norm.

One way or another, short, withered, with a small wedge-shaped
beard, Maisky was immediately taken to the
ambassador's office. "I express my deep sympathy for the peoples
of Czechoslovakia and my deep indignation at the betrayal of England
and France against Czechoslovakia," Maisky said, holding out his hands
to

Masaryk. Masaryk - a tall, strong, under normal circumstances
somewhat cynical man (a characteristic of Maisky himself) fell on
Maisky's chest, began to kiss him and burst into tears

like a child ... - They sold me into slavery to the Germans, - he
exclaimed through tears, - like once Negroes sold into slavery in

America... Well, it was a picture - I imagine! Tall Masaryk, sagging
on the small Maisky, and Maisky propping up this whiny carcass like a
voluntary support ... Eh! Well, what else is
there to say? Is that - ugh!

And ALL this political farce was staged, I remind you, almost exclusively by members of the League of Nations - completely ignoring their membership in it ... In his

telegram to the USSR People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs from London, Maisky wrote on

October 2, 1938: "The League of Nations and collective security are dead. " Nevertheless, even after that, in the editorial of Izvestia on October 4, 1938, under the heading "The policy of rewarding the aggressor," Litvinov's line of provocative insult to Germany, Italy and Japan was continued.

Izvestia (the former fiefdom of Bukharin, and then of Boris Tal), having been regularly helping Litvinov in his anti-German efforts for more than a year, wrote: "In a short

time, events have taken place in ***Europe, the significance of which is not limited to the redrawing of the geographical map. This is not the first time... nations are facing fascist aggression... Abyssinia, Spain, China, Austria, Czechoslovakia have consistently become victims of voracious fascist cannibals. But for the first time we learn that the seizure of foreign territories, the crossing by foreign armies of borders guaranteed by international treaties is nothing but a "triumph" or "victory" of the world ...*** "Let's read, dear reader," into Izvestinsky lines

attentively...

First, there are a number of "great" geographical "discoveries". Abyssinia and China were discovered in Europe...

Secondly, the tone of the second most important Soviet officialdom was irresponsibly cocky. Yes,

Ethiopia-Abyssinia Italy trampled. But we could not help the Ethiopians with speeches. In addition, in Ethiopia, few people even knew that there is such a land in the world - Russia ...

But we angered Mussolini and quarreled with ourselves ... And he treated the USSR very loyally - until our attacks on him about the Abyssinian aggression. After these attacks,

the Duce at first simply went berserk, then calmed down a little ... Izvestia again irritated this already healed wound.

For what? Italy traded well with us. And on the nose of Russia was the third five-year plan.

Further, Izvestia mentioned Spain ... The Italian-German corps entered there as an ally of the Spaniard Franco. At the end of 1938, a civil war was still going on in Spain, and we also participated in it on the side of the Republicans. So

why was Spain to blame Germany and Italy? After all, as far as Germany, it was generally our main economic partner! Austria, however, was not

swallowed by any "cannibals". I also wrote about Austria and the Anschluss in the book Russia and Germany: The Path to the Pact. But the fact that "Versailles" Austria is rotting away was not denied even on the sidelines of the

Litvinov NKID. And Izvestia put Germany and Austria on the line, once again spoofing both the Germans and the Austrians, and, in fact, Hitler personally, who was especially jealous of the Austrian problem.

And, finally, Czechoslovakia ...

Enough has already been said about it to understand that the alien, not belonging to them by historical right, territory (and not only the Sudetenland) was captured in 1919 not by the Germans, but by the Czechs. And even - they didn't capture, but servilely picked up the territorial "pieces" thrown by him from the master's

"Versailles" table. Got it!

They didn't refuse! Here, perhaps, it is necessary to further explain why I above, everywhere he spoke about the Czechs, and not about the "Czechoslovaks" ...

Yes, because there was no such people - "Czechoslovaks" in nature and no.

There are Czechs whose political leaders - Benes, Masaryk, Stefanik - have long served not so much Czech as American interests.

And there are Slovaks, whom the Czechs treated a little better than the Sudeten Germans, that is, very dismissively, keeping Slovakia in the position of an internal colony.

Hitler did not take over Czechoslovakia. He later entered the Czech Republic (and even then - formally invited by the Czech President Hacha himself). And Slovakia enthusiastically declared independence.

She had reasons for that.

The last point in which Izvestia was provocative and even went against the official Soviet line was that the borders of Czechoslovakia were guaranteed by such a peculiar "international" treaty as the Treaty of Versailles.

And Lenin also called him predatory in relation to the Germans. Stalin and the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks also invariably negatively attested the Versailles Treaty in all public speeches and statements - precisely because of the discrimination against Germany ...

Ivan Maisky expressed "deep sympathy for the peoples of Czechoslovakia", but among these peoples, the Germans made up about a quarter! Quarter! And this quarter, the

Versailles

Treaty prohibited even dream of reunification with the rest of the Germans.

So in the "post-Munich" situation, the Soviet Union would have been better off just keeping quiet. However, could he

remain silent, having Litvinov as the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, if, through the efforts of Litvinov, the Soviet Union in the "pre-Munich" situation behaved stupidly, short-sightedly and contrary to its own strategic interests? POLITICAL 1939 began for the USSR with the fact that on January

20, 1939, our representative in the League of Nations, Yakov Zakharovich Surits, spoke at a session of the Council of the League ...

Surits spoke out in defense of China, spoke passionately and intelligently, but where? And to whom? Yakov

Zakharovich ended his speech as follows: -

Expressing here once again all its ardent sympathy for the Chinese people, who are staunchly fighting for their independence, my government reiterates that it is ready, as in the past, to comply with any decision of the League aimed at taking measures necessary to protect the collective security of peoples. Security, so devalued, but which must be created if we really want to achieve ever an honorable and just peace for all ...

To be honest, China fought for its independence far from being as steadfast as it could, because Mao Zedong's party was an enemy worse than the Japanese for the Chiang Kai-shek regime.

But what is even more depressing here is that Surits himself, declaring at the Council of the League that it is "not about expressing platonic wishes or putting forward utopian plans", in fact

expressed precisely platonic wishes and insisted on

fulfillment of utopian - for a specific League of Nations - plans.

A TWO weeks before Surits' speech, the theme of the League of Nations popped up in another thread...

On January 5, German Chancellor Hitler received Polish Foreign Minister Colonel Beck. "I am glad that German-Polish relations are strong," began

Beck, but there are also difficulties that should be eliminated. - What do you

have in mind? Hitler responded immediately. - Well, for example, the question of Danzig ... It concerns not only the German and Polish governments. But also third parties. Including the League of Nations ... AND HERE I will divert the reader's attention from the

meeting between Hitler and Beck, to clarify something...

The Baltic port and city of Danzig (in Poland it is called Gdansk) has always been more of a German than a Polish city - even when it was part of the Commonwealth. Established in 997, Danzig was gradually settled by Germans from the 12th century, and in the 14th century became part of the Hanseatic League of German cities. Its subsequent assignment to Poland changed little. Suffice it to say that the architecture of

Danzig is famous not for Polish Catholic churches, but for the old Protestant German churches - the Trinity, Nikolaus, Cathedral ... After the second partition of Poland in 1793, the city became German (Prussian) and state affiliation, but after the defeat of Prussia by Napoleon in 1807 was declared a free city. Seven years

later, Napoleon abdicated, and Danzig, by decision of the Vienna Congress of 1814-1815, was returned to Prussia.

Danzig was declared a free "republic" under the protection of the League of Nations after the defeat of Germany in the First World War. But the city was populated almost exclusively by Germans (95% of the population in 1924). For those who intended to muddy the waters in

Europe, Danzig has long been a convenient point of application for their impure efforts. And in the 20th century everything

the Danzig corridor also aggravated ...

There was a time, in the USSR they wrote the truth about it, and this is how it looked on the pages of the 20th volume of the 1st edition of the TSB from 1930: "The Danzig corridor (or the Polish corridor), a narrow strip of Polish territory, separating East Prussia and the "Free City of Danzig" from the rest of Germany in the lower reaches of the Vistula River, and giving Poland access to the sea... The Danzig Corridor in Polish hands is one of the most serious obstacles to a lasting agreement between Germany and Poland. Germany claims that D.k. leads to economic degradation Vost. Prussia (a special role is played by the difficulty of using the Vistula River), while Poland does not need it (only 15% of Polish exports go through Danzig). Germany further accuses the Poles of trying to economically belittle the role of Danzig by turning it into their military harbor and taking advantage of the availability of the seashore at D.K. for the construction of a new, completely unnecessary harbor in Gdynia. Finally, Germany accuses the Poles of completely running the railroad. construction in D.k. ... Poland, for its part, indicates that it cannot abandon D.k., because. otherwise, Germany could always close her access to the sea (***although the Anglo-French could easily guarantee the Poles the exception of such a development of affairs.*** - S.K.). From the fact of the fall of the economic importance of the East. Prussia, as a result of the existence of D.K., the Polish chauvinists draw a conclusion (***the impudence of which is not easy to surpass.*** - S.K.) about the need to annex this region to Poland (demands of R. Dmowski). The Locarno Accords oblige Germany not to forcefully change its eastern frontiers. However, unlike its Rhine borders, Germany never voluntarily recognized the territorial changes introduced by the Treaty of Versailles in the East. And there is no doubt that she will seek the return of D.K. in the future." I note that the opinion of even the "head of the Polish state" Józef

Pilsudski, whose closest collaborator was Colonel Beck, did not disagree with this conclusion of the Soviet academic publication ... So, knowing what is said above, we will better understand that

the conversation below...

AFTER Beck mentions Danzig and the League of Nations, Hitler winced, but Beck continued:

What would happen if one day the League of Nations dissociated itself from the question of Danzig? Hitler

answered Beck's question quite definitely: - Danzig remains and will always be German ... Sooner or later this city will go to Germany.

Now Beck was grimacing, but the Fuhrer continued: "Of course, Polish economic interests must be ensured, and this is in the interests of Danzig, since it cannot exist economically without Poland.

Beck nodded his head in agreement, and Hitler explained: - I am now thinking about a formula according to which Danzig will become German politically, and Poland will remain economically .. - And the "corridor"?

For Hitler and all Germans in general, the "Polish", "Danzig", "corridor", given to Poland by the same Treaty of Versailles and giving Poland access to the sea at the cost of cutting off German East Prussia from the rest of Germany, was the most important and complex psychological problem. But that is why

Hitler thought about it a lot and hard. He would have been glad to get along with the Poles, but he understood that it was impossible to get along with the Poles on the basis of a reasonable compromise. The Poles are either impudent until they get hit in the teeth, or they are helpful after they

get hit in the teeth. So far, they have not been hit in the teeth and therefore are impudent. The second option is to punch them in the teeth. But why in this

case negotiate with them? Nevertheless, Hitler answered conciliatorily: "It would be sheer nonsense to take away access to the sea from Poland. I am fully aware that if you find yourself in such a bag, then the resulting tension will be like a loaded revolver, the trigger can work at any moment ... Beck again

nodded his head in agreement. However, with the head - but already warningly, Hitler also shook:

“Yes, but to the same extent Germany needs unhindered communication with East Prussia... I think you need to discuss this with Ribbentrop...”

The next day Beck met with his German colleague Ribbentrop. An hour and a half

conversation began immediately with Danzig, and Beck just threatened the

German ... - Mr. Reich Minister, the tactics of small "fait accomplis" used by the Senate and the population of Danzig are already affecting Polish interests today ...

“But Germans live in Danzig and they also have their own interests,” Ribbentrop retorted, but immediately reassured him, “nevertheless, the Fuhrer has already told you that the most important thing for us is a broad consolidation of mutual

relations. Beck bristled even

more: “Mr. Reichsminister, Danzig, in the minds of the entire Polish people, is the touchstone of German-Polish relations, and it would be very difficult to change that mindset. Marshal Pilsudski told you about this... - But all this can be solved, - answered

Ribbentrop. “Let's say Germany's connection to her province, East Prussia, through an extraterritorial highway and railroad. For this, as compensation from Germany - a guarantee of the corridor and Polish property ...

Beck shrugged his

shoulders... This was not the first time that the Germans had such conversations with the Poles, but by 1939 they already felt quite confident militarily and were fed up with Polish subterfuges on a quite clear

question. Hitler did not want to endure the “Polish arrogance” anymore ... That is why on January 5, the former German ambassador to Moscow Nadolny and the famous economic adviser of the Moscow embassy Hilger suddenly appeared in our Berlin embassy ... A native

of Moscow, Hilger with a purely Moscow accent told Plenipotentiary Merekalov:

- Alexey Fyodorovich! We have just come from your trade mission and inform you that we have already expressed there the desire of the German government to resume our negotiations on a loan of two hundred million marks by Germany to the Soviet Union with a significant improvement in the conditions we had previously put forward.

"I am glad," the plenipotentiary replied, "and I will immediately inform Moscow about this ...

Negotiations on the loan began in January 1938, but the Germans tried to get more for themselves than they gave us, and in March 1938 the negotiations were interrupted. And then suddenly the Germans themselves came

forward to meet us ... Of course, it was just a sounding so far.

The Germans wanted to understand whether it

was possible to move from confrontation with the Russians and muddy conversations with the Poles in the "Eastern" issue to a new relationship with the Russians at the expense of the Poles? In a conversation with Beck, Ribbentrop said to

the Polish Colonel Minister: "We are interested in Soviet Ukraine only insofar as we have caused

damage to the Russians wherever we can, so

just like they do to us...

Bek smiled subtly... Then the "Ukrainian" question had a "Carpathian" flavor. In the spirit of "Munich", the Hungarians demanded that the Czechs transfer to them Transcarpathian Ukraine with a population of more than one million people.

On November 2, in Vienna, the arbitration of Germany and Italy satisfied this requirement (and in March 1939, Hungarian troops occupied Transcarpathian Ukraine with the cities of Uzhgorod, Mukachevo and Khust).

And now Ribbentrop told Warsaw directly that Germany's interests did not extend beyond the Carpathians, and hinted that let Warsaw deal with Ukrainian affairs on its own. After that, Beck cheered up so much that Ribbentrop

did not hesitate to ask: "You don't seem to have abandoned your ambitious aspirations."

Marshal Pilsudski in the direction of Ukraine? Beck smiled even more subtly and said: - We have already been in Kyiv itself ... Kyiv stands in the same place, It means that our aspirations are also alive ...

Ribbentrop chuckled knowingly...

However, in reality he had already put an end to the Poles, just like his chief, the Fuhrer. The Russian

version of the union looked preferable. And the hitch was that the current relations with Russia were very bad, and Litvinov's line made them simply hopeless. However, Berlin nevertheless began its "Russian"

soundings ... And the spring of 1939 brought one stunning political news after another. And for the League of Nations - born, if not deadly, then vilely - the

bleak time of withering finally set in. Autumn came in the middle of spring. For the Anglo-Saxon League of Nations, the pre-final, autumn period of its history began ... Article 3 of the Statute of the League determined that the sessions of its Assembly were held once a year,

as a rule, at the beginning of September ... I don't know how the Council of the League planned the Assembly of 1939, but in that year, September turned out to be marked by completely different events than the regular session of the League of Nations ...

IN MARCH 39th September was still far away. Although since the beginning of this March, everything in Europe has been spinning as if slow motion frames were projected onto a political screen in an accelerated mode.

On March 1, the Soviet Union withdrew its representative from the London Committee for Non-Intervention in Spanish Affairs (this Committee arose in 1936 outside the League of Nations when it refused to support the republican government of Spain). On March 10, the 18th Congress of

the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks opened in Moscow. On March 14, the Czechoslovak President Hácha "handed over the" fate of the Czech people "into Hitler's hands, and on the 14th the independence of Slovakia was proclaimed (by encouraging the Slovaks in this, the German Hitler only anticipated the efforts of the Czech Havel) ...

On March 15, units of the Wehrmacht entered Prague. The Czechs, instead of supporting the bed of machine guns with their left hand, and putting the index finger of their right hand on the trigger, made a "German greeting" with their right hand, and with their left ... They held handkerchiefs to their mouths

with their left ... Well, I personally have no desire to regret them ...

On March 15 and 16, a conference of German and British industrialists was held in Düsseldorf. An agreement on cooperation and division of markets was signed. Düsseldorf laid the foundations for peace in Europe and for this reason alone was doomed by the Churchills and Roosevelts to a quick and inevitable collapse. I will say more about this... On March 21, Germany finally made a natural and legal

for her step and demanded from Poland the transfer of Danzig to her.

On March 22, the Germans landed in the original German port of Memel, which in Lithuania was called Klaipeda. On March 28,

General Franco's troops entered Madrid. A March 31
England gave Poland guarantees against aggression...

INTERESTING inversion of dates ... "Golden" England, saturated with aristocratic Freemasonry, pushed Poland (and most importantly, the people of England) to war with Germany on March 31st.

But "golden" France, saturated with Freemasonry not only aristocratic, but also "democratic" since the time of the Templars and Cathars, was more frank. And she pushed herself and Poland to war with Germany not on any other day, namely on April 13 (thirteenth!) By giving Poland its own guarantees - in addition to the English ones.

On April 27, a law on universal military service was adopted in England, and on April 28, Germany unilaterally terminated the non-aggression pact with Poland and the naval agreement with England.

April is over. May
began ... By the

SPRING of 1939, the fate of autumn became the fate of not only the League of Nations. In the midst of the violent Moscow spring and May flowering, a political autumn set in for Maxim Maximovich Litvinov as well.

On May 5, he was removed from the post of People's Commissar of the USSR for Foreign Affairs. He was replaced by Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. At the same time, Molotov remained at the head of the Council of People's Commissars.

The NKID began a major purge of the "Wallach stables". And Molotov at a meeting of the NKID said: "Litvinov did not ensure the implementation of the party line in the People's Commissariat on the issue of selection and education of personnel. The NKID was not completely Bolshevik,

since Comrade Litvinov held on to a number of people alien and hostile to the party and the Soviet state. If Molotov had also added "... and ideas",

then the picture of Litvin's policy would have been complete. However, the new people's commissar did not say too much. Nevertheless, completely different ideas were now being prescribed within the walls of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs ... Instead of friendship with the members of the League of Nations,

Russia began to turn its face towards the power that had finished its calculations with this League a long time ago. Russia turned towards Germany ...

New ideas were born in the Kremlin, and they required not only already wiser by political experience, but also new, fresh people.

For many things in the country had to be looked at with new, fresh with a look.

Chapter

2 London - Berlin - Moscow - Tokyo

IN THE AUTUMN 1939, the Plenipotentiary of the USSR in Sweden, Alexandra Mikhailovna Kollontai, came to Moscow for a short time and met with Stalin ... The general's daughter Shurochka Domontovich, who left her husband Vladimir Kollontai at the age of 26 for the future revolution, came to the revolutionary environment at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She did not immediately become a Bolshevik, and in her turbulent life, different things happened at different times. However, since 1923, all her party work took place abroad - at embassy posts ... The plenipotentiary and trade representative in Norway, the plenipotentiary in Mexico, then again in Norway, and since 1930 - in Sweden. In the 23rd year, she was already fifty-one years old, but Kollontai was still pretty and knew how to charm not only with a sharp mind, but also with purely feminine charms. However, high positions were required. And the former Shurochka gave way to an elegant lady who was secular only outwardly. In its

inner essence, it was still the same Leninist party man, able not to lose his head, no matter how they go

affairs...

Stalin and Kollontai (who was six years older than him) had known each other for a long time, so the conversation immediately began not at all diplomatic, but frank. There was already a war in Poland, the Germans were successfully advancing towards Warsaw, and the two old comrades-in-arms had something to talk about frankly ...

- How do you assess our pact with the Germans, Alexandra Mikhailovna? Stalin asked almost immediately. "Well, I am sure that this action strengthened the peace. She mixed cards, and it was important and necessary.

- World? Stalin grinned into his mustache. "Alexandra Mikhailovna, but now all," Stalin emphasized the last word loudly and contemptuously, "the world is shouting that the Bolsheviks, with their pact with the Nazis, opened the way to war!" "Ah," Kollontai waved her hand so carelessly that it fit Shurochka Domontovich, "is it worth it to tell us about this, she too

singled it out to "us" - and here! The world is in a state of restructuring. Isn't that what we wanted in our youth? Alas, humanity is not able to understand that thanks to all these collisions and changes, we are rapidly moving forward, and yet in the thirties we have traveled a path equal to a century! So, you support us? - Certainly! A socialist country must resolutely resort to new forms in matters of foreign policy and solve interstate problems with new methods. "Very well," agreed Stalin. - You know, Iosif Vissarionovich, I look to the future with joy and confidence ...

Stalin again nodded in agreement, and Kollontai continued: "But a few days ago I received a threatening letter from those Beck Poles who had already fled Poland. "Well, well," Stalin became interested. - They write that they will settle accounts with me, and declare: "If life is dear to you, get out of here" ... - Life ... - thoughtfully, as if to himself, Stalin said, and Kollontai immediately responded: "Of course, I love and appreciate life, but if these cowards who escaped from the line of fire knew how wonderful it is to die for an idea on, so to speak, the barricades ..."

"You are in vain," Stalin waved his hand. - Firstly, such threats are rarely carried out, and secondly, we need you whole, unharmed, healthy and vigorous ...

The interlocutors were silent, and then Stalin said in a completely special, unfamiliar Kollontai tone: "Oh, Alexandra Mikhailovna! Many of the affairs of our party and people will be distorted and spat on, primarily abroad, and in our country too ... - In ours? - Kollontai did not believe her ears, and Stalin even angrily confirmed:

"In ours, in ours... Zionism, striving for world domination, will cruelly avenge us for our successes and achievements. He still views Russia as a barbarian country, as a raw material appendage...

Kollontai, struck by the power and meaning of Stalin's words, could not find what to answer. And Stalin, with a bitterness never heard from him, added: - And my

name will also be slandered, slandered ... They will attribute to me a lot of atrocities...

KOLLONTAI didn't console Stalin then and assure him of the opposite... Then she only sighed in response, and only then said, just like Stalin did to her

before: - Well, you're in vain... - Let's wait and see, - he threw back Stalin. And Kollontai departed for Sweden, where she soon faced serious and responsible

troubles ... In 1939, however, many people had enough trouble ... March 25 twin-engine "Electra" for high-altitude aerial photography of the territory of Germany and Italy. In April, he flew over Berlin twice. At first, Cotton's flights were financed by the French, and then by the British themselves. London looked more and more closely at the situation on the continent in real

time. And an extra look at her from the height of a reconnaissance flight was useful.

It was not superfluous to look at the situation and simply reconnaissance - through agents. Intelligence Service, like the German Abwehr, had ample opportunities in this regard, but Soviet intelligence also did not slurp bast cabbage soup. And not only because its employees did not wear bast

shoes. That is why already at the end of February 1939, Dekanozov, the head of the 3rd (counterintelligence) department of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD of the USSR, received another intelligence report transmitted to him from the 7th (special) department of the GUGB. It was the interception of a letter from the former tsarist diplomat Sablin from London to his émigré boss Maklakov in Paris dated February 14 ...

Intelligence of the NKVD always had excellent informants among the white emigration, and the leadership of organized white emigration was

well aware of the very secret details of current world politics and the actions of diplomats from different countries.

There was nothing surprising here - for example, Vasily Alekseevich Maklakov, a former prominent cadet, former ambassador of the Provisional Government (and later also a diplomatic representative of Kolchak, Denikin, Wrangel) in France, became in 1932 an informed man Or here - the same Evgeny Vasilyevich Sablin. A nobleman from the Cossacks, in 1915, at the forty, he was the emigrant Council ambassadors. age of first secretary of the embassy

in London, in the early twenties he was the manager of the embassy (the former royal "temporary", of course), chargé d'affaires ... His correspondence with Maklakov was conducted regularly. And she regularly ended up in the GUGB of the NKVD of the USSR, and then - often on the table of Stalin.

Information came from Tokyo (to Maklakov in Paris, and through agents to Moscow) from the former first secretary of the tsarist embassy, and since November 1921, chargé d'affaires Abrikosov, and so on ... Former tsarist diplomats were very kindly received in influential

Western circles . They were not offended in the diplomatic departments of the Western capitals either (all the more so since the former Russian diplomats themselves did not consider themselves former, and some of their Western colleagues agreed with them). So, on February 8, 1939, Sablin, who had turned gray in London, went to the French embassy to see an old acquaintance, Brigadier

General Henri Lelon. Lelon had been in Russia back in tsarist times, in London he was in the status of a military attaché, so that his knowledge of both Russian and English affairs could be trusted. Moreover, he was a sober person ...

In London, and in Europe in general, then everyone was interested in the "Ukrainian" issue. And then everything was clear. Hitler was strengthening, Munich was already behind, and on the nose was the return of Memel (Klaipeda) and the Memel region by Germany on March 22 with the tacit consent of England.

Memel was a matter almost settled, and it could be assumed that the Czech Republic would also soon enter the orbit of Germany (which, as we know, happened on March 15).

And the question of the Danzig corridor was put on the political agenda of 1939 more and more acutely. This was also clear. But it was completely unclear how it would be resolved and who Germany and Poland would turn out to be already in 1939 - enemies waging war against each other, or ... Or - allies waging a common war against the USSR ... The

West would like, say, the next ... Poland on one condition or another, the "corridor" cedes to Germany, but on the other hand, with the help of Germany, it receives increments at the expense of Soviet Ukraine. And Germany is becoming more accommodating in relation to Poland, because in a military alliance with the Polish Zholnezh, it annexes part of the rich from "Khokhlyatsky"

lands. The picture was tempting for the West, but how real was it? And in order to

increase the chances for **such** a development of the situation, in Europe in general, and in England in particular, they suddenly started talking loudly that Hitler intended to annex Ukraine. At the same time, the movement of Germany through the Subcarpathian (Transcarpathian) Ukraine, in other words, bypassing Poland, was called as probable. But hardly anyone seriously thought that Hitler would begin to push his way to Kyiv through Mukachevo, inevitably bogging down in the Carpathians.

Of course not! If Hitler had listened to the cunning recommendations and began to really desire what the Guardian and Figaro were credited to him, then only a direct blow from the Germans would have been reasonable. And it could only be applied through Poland. That is, the Anglo-French hinted (or even directly suggested) to the Germans that Germany should go to Russia **together**

with Poland. There was a time when Hitler actively supported all these illusions - in his speeches. But he was in no hurry to block with Poland. And the British governor of Egypt even published a pamphlet with a foreword by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lord Halifax, where he reproached Hitler for becoming a de "perjurer" by not attacking the USSR so far, although he promised this all the

thirties. In Europe, and especially in English, newspapers and in the English BBC, a malicious and malicious campaign was unleashed against us. Regarding Hitler, everything was limited to sluggish on-duty criticism ...

Such was the case at the moment when Collegiate Councilor Sablin crossed the threshold of the London French Embassy to talk with General Lelon ...

Sablin was not worried about the "Ukrainian" issue at all by the Europeans (and let's not forget the Americans). The West wanted above all such a conflict between Hitler and the Russians, which would mutually weaken Germany and Russia and program Anglo-Saxon world domination. Sablin was worried about the future fate of a united and indivisible Russia, which could be adversely affected by the intentions of both the West and Hitler. - What do you think, Henri, does

Hitler really have belligerent intentions towards Ukraine? Sablin asked first in Russian.

- No! I do not think that Herr Hitler is presently preoccupied with this question. He's clearly out of the loop! Lelon answered without hesitation in Russian, which he knew quite well. Then he grinned and continued:

"We would actually be happy if Hitler

got stuck in Russia. Russia would become his grave. But the officers of the German General Staff are not some fools, and they should advise Mr. Hitler of this option.

How do you think England and France will react to the invasion of German troops in the south of Russia? - Sablin led his.

Oh, this is a world war, a world war! I don't see anything else! So you will help

the Soviets? Sablin bluntly slashed. Lelon was confused: - Well, I have every reason to

think that the Russian army will defend your limits! - Herself?

- You know, Evgeny, it has always been an exaggeration to talk about some amazing strength of the current Russian army. But just as exaggerated are the rumors about her current supposedly complete impotence. If the Russians did not send troops to Czechoslovakia, then this happened because we ourselves did not fulfill our obligations ... The general was

silent, then pointedly remarked:

- Pay attention to the frankness with which I tell you this ... Lelon, of course,

was cunning and was frank not when he announced the readiness of the Anglo-French to start a world war because of German aggression against the USSR, but when he let it slip that for France it would be beneficial to tie Hitler to Russia.

Just as slyly "frank" was with Sablin and his second French interlocutor that day - embassy adviser Roger Cambon (son of the famous Jules Cambon, chairman of the ambassadors of the Paris Peace Conference in 1920-1931, who died in 1935).

Cambon said to Sablin: "I have just returned from Paris, where I have been for four weeks." My information is as follows: the "Ukrainian" question, since it is about the plans set out in the books of Hitler and Rosenberg, has been removed from the queue. The Germans are disappointed in their Ukrainian agents... So you can sleep easy...

But Sablin did not calm down and asked Cambon the same question as Lelon:

· - Can France remain indifferent to penetration to the Russian

South? - Well, what are you! - the French reassured the Russian again, - this would not suit us as much as it cannot suit

English...

IF England and France were really concerned about the possibility of Hitler's seizure of the Russian South, then in the spring of 1939 they would have behaved in exactly the opposite way as it happened in reality. A little later, in the summer,

in one of the orientation memorandums
The Foreign Office spoke of the true way of thinking and acting as follows:
"It is desirable to conclude some kind of agreement with the USSR that the Soviet Union will come to our aid if we are attacked from the East (i.e. by Germany. - S.K.), not only to force Germany to fight on two fronts, but also, probably, and because - and this is the most important thing - ... that if the war starts, then you should try to draw the Soviet Union into it ... "

As you can see, shouting at the top of John Boolean about the threat from Germany to Soviet Ukraine, in London they seriously considered the option of hitting Hitler on the West!

Nevertheless, the "democratic" West did not go for a real alliance with Russia. I'll talk about this a little later, but I'll immediately notice this ... Understanding why the West was so "blind" (a favorite expression addressed to it by "historians of the Central Committee of the CPSU"), we must know that those who led the way to war. Everything was done by someone (or - You-Know-Who) quite

deliberately ... After all, my dear reader, we must not forget for a minute that Uncle Sam was constantly present behind the scenes of events. Outwardly, he was on the side, on the side, but his role was behind the scenes - directorial. And everything that happened in 1939 with the Anglo-French was ultimately explained not by the plans of England and France, but by the plans of

the United States. Or rather, the plans of the Golden International, for which the United States has always been a favorite brainchild. The golden supranational elite had already given the Yankees one triumph in World War I. And this war betrayed Europe to the States, if not head over heels, then with their pockets turned inside out.

And now this elite, taking on the role of the author of the scenario, was preparing a new gift for Uncle Sam and for itself in the form of a new world war, in which the elite could ensure success only by pushing the nationalist Third Reich and the socialist Soviet Union. With this prospect in mind, the

British Ambassador to the USSR, Seeds, on March 21, 1939, demanded an urgent reception from the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Max Litvinov.

Litvinov summoned him to his office

at 2.30 pm. - What is the urgency? — inquired

the drug addict. "I have just received a message from our envoy in Bucharest. He met personally with the Romanian king, and he informed him that Germany was making completely unacceptable demands, and that Romania was resisting German pressure, but ...

- But?

"But she won't be able to do it indefinitely unless she gets the promise of outside help.

It was about the pressure of the Germans on the Romanians, who were not inclined to sign a trade agreement beneficial to the Germans. And, presumably, Litvinov was bursting with a desire to edify that, they say, here they are, the fruits of Europe's refusal from that system of collective security, which he so persistently advertised from the rostrum of the League of Nations. Given the reality, the price of this idea was a broken penny, but Litvinov was very

proud of it. Nevertheless, the people's commissar simply listened - quite, however, favorably, and Seeds spilled like an English lark:

- Regarding the situation that has arisen, my government holds such an opinion ...

Seeds took a breath and led on:

- Now, after the absorption of Czechoslovakia by Germany (***Hitler, if he swallowed, then only the Czech Republic, which climbed into the Fuhrer's mouth voluntarily.*** - S.K.), when the German government extended its conquests to another nation, no European state can not consider itself directly or ultimately threatened.

From this ornate phrase, clearly hinting at the fact that Russia, they say, also "cannot but consider itself endangered in the long run," would have set the subtle stylist on edge. But such words were sweeter than honey to Litvinov, and he shook his head in agreement at Seeds's speech. And under these swaying, Seeds handed over to the People's Commissar (who had to stay in this capacity for a little over a month) a draft declaration. It was proposed to sign it on behalf of four states: Great Britain, the USSR, France and Poland ...

The piquancy of the moment was that, firstly, the Soviet Union was called upon to support that boyar Romania, which in 1918 annexed our Bessarabia. And this annexation was confirmed by the Paris Protocol of October 28, 1920, signed by France, Italy, Japan and ... England.

Secondly, the "absorption" of the Czech Republic was programmed by the States, France and, again, England back in 1919 at Versailles. And it was finally sanctioned in 1938 in Munich by the same powers (the States - behind the scenes). And back in May 1938, Foreign Office Gray Eminence Horace Wilson calmly confessed to our

Plenipotentiary Maisky that England expects Germany to "take over" a number of Central European and even Balkan countries.

Finally, the proposed declaration actually gave joint guarantees to that panorama of Poland, which ... Well, I don't

even want to talk about Poland once again ... Litvinov,

however, accepted the project and in the end could not resist so as not to prick Seeds: they

preventive measures, emphasized the need - We are, after all, to prevent war. The draft declaration of 21 March was so brief that I

I will quote the hesitation in full:

"We, the undersigned, duly authorized to that effect, hereby declare that since peace and security in Europe are a matter of common interest and concern, and since European peace and security may be affected by any action that threatens the independence of any European State, our respective governments hereby undertake to immediately consult on the steps to be taken for the common resistance to such actions."

Despite the vagueness of the wording, the meaning of the declaration was really threatening only for Germany. Moreover, in anticipation of such her actions, which for the USSR were or harmless, or even - indirectly, useful.

However, the very next day, March 22, Litvinov summoned Seeds to 20 clock and said:

We stand in solidarity with you and accept your wording. Tensely waiting for Litvinov's

(actually Stalin's) answer, Seeds perked up. Litvinov continued: "We are ready to sign as soon as France and Poland

promise their signatures.

Seeds got serious. And he completely sank when Litvinov finished: -

To give the act a special solemnity and obligation, we propose that the prime ministers and ministers of foreign affairs of all four states sign it.

England's proposal was discussed at the Politburo, and Litvinov managed to convince Stalin that it was

acceptable. Having agreed with this, Stalin also agreed that the Balkan, Baltic and Scandinavian countries, including Finland, should also be invited to join the declaration. Considering our tense relations with the latter, this was proof of the USSR's inclination towards peace in all areas of its European policy (except, perhaps, German). When Litvinov informed Seeds about a possible

addition to the list of participants in the declaration, he, already withered, was not happy, and Litvinov added at the end: - I warn you that tomorrow we will publish our answer

in print. Indeed, the conversation was immediately followed by a TASS report dated March 22. NEXT time Seeds and Litvinov were talking - you have to

guess so! — 1 April. The day before, March 31, Prime Minister Chamberlain spoke in

the House of Commons with a statement on the provision of guarantees to Poland. Chamberlain reported that "in the event of any action which would clearly threaten the independence of Poland, and which the Polish Government accordingly deems necessary to resist with its national armed forces, His Majesty's Government considers itself under an obligation immediately to give the Polish Government all the support that is in its power." Chamberlain was also told that he had been authorized by the French Government

to explain that the position of the French was similar to that of the British.

Having given such "one-sided" guarantees to anti-Soviet Poland, anti-Soviet Britain and France were now proposing to the Soviet Union to give Poland "also" unilateral guarantees - as if we had nothing more to do than to protect the impudent claims of the Polish lords on the Western Ukraine and Belarus...

Just after all these "April Fools" European tricks Seeds and appeared in the office of the Soviet People's Commissar.

Litvinov was gloomy, cold and unkind, like a March day in a belated and blizzard of spring. Still - kind to his soul

the Anglo-French planted a huge pig on him. At first, they successfully provoked their draft declaration so that Litvinov advocated for them before Stalin, and then ... And then they "threw" "Max" as the

last small-town fool ... They achieved their goal - the USSR made such public statements that provided the Russians the persistence of Berlin's hostility towards them. Of course, such a line was the line of Litvinov himself. But there are also limits to what

is possible! What will the old party wolf "Papasha" look like now in the eyes of Stalin, and in general of the entire Politburo? And in general - in the eyes of any intelligent person? So Litvinov was cold. Seeds, without explaining the purpose of the visit, asked Max

what he thought of Chamberlain's statement yesterday. If there was a place for evil humor in the official conversations of diplomats, then the most

successful answer to the question of an Englishman would be: "This is an April Fool's joke." But etiquette is etiquette ... And the people's commissar simply said nothing. Seeds was not embarrassed and answered himself: - We believe that you should

welcome it, as a manifestation of the new British policy along the path of collective security. And we expect you to express your understanding of such

step.

What was said was blatant impudence, and Litvinov, not reacting he asked bluntly,

caustically: "But how is it to be understood that England, having turned to us on her own initiative with a proposal for a joint declaration, after our consent did not show any further official interest?" Seeds - neither to the village nor to the city -

referred to some conversations between Halifax and Cadogan (the permanent Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, that is, in fact, the "working" chief of the Foreign Office) with our plenipotentiary Maisky ... Then a languid skirmish ensued, at the end of which

Seeds with feigned (for it could not have been any other) insult mumbled:

- Well, yes! England's steps always find their critics somewhere... Whatever England does, there is always someone dissatisfied. And me, sir

Litvinov, it is very unpleasant to meet such a cold

related to the application...

And even the Anglophile Litvinov had no choice but to shrug your shoulders silently and avoid continuing the conversation.

Alas, the period of Anglo-French provocations against Russia and Germany in 1939 did not end there. The Soviet Union was provoked—and successfully, for Litvinov was still the people's commissar—in April.

They provoked in May... And in June, when the Anglo-Soviet negotiations began... London and Paris insisted over and over again that the USSR should undertake public obligations to fight for Poland and Romania if they were attacked by Germany. However, they didn't want to hear about the help of the USSR if they attacked it, if it was about Russia ... The principle of reciprocity of obligations is the basis of any lasting alliance: they did not recognize even a marriage, even a political one ...

True, there were differences in the positions of London and Paris. After all, Paris, unlike London, was not separated by the English Channel from Berlin. And so the new proposals of the British and French, received by Moscow in mid-April, looked very different.

Foreign Minister Bonnet informed us of his readiness to exchange letters obliging the parties to mutual support should one of them be drawn into a war with Germany as a result of helping Poland or Rumania. London again stressed the need for the Soviet Union to accept unilateral obligations to help "its European

neighbors"...

Y-yes...

And what happened next...

On April 17, Litvinov summoned Seeds straight from the theatre.

Crossing the threshold of the people's commissar's office, the ambassador is dissatisfied grumbled: -

You didn't even let me finish watching the play ... - I'll

answer you with the words of your superiors: "The moment is very dangerous, and you must act quickly." It was precisely this posture that Halifax declared to Maisky in London the day before yesterday. And he asked to be answered out

Moscow on his proposals was received no later than the seventeenth ... Today is just the seventeenth, and here is our answer.

With these words, Litvinov handed the paper to Seeds, and the People's Commissariat's interpreter immediately read it out. These were the reciprocal proposals of the USSR. Seeds became animated as he listened, and after listening, he said: - This proposal is very interesting, and I will immediately convey it to London. However, I left my wife at the theater and would like to

return there as soon as possible ... Therefore, further conversation was short-lived. The Soviet answer was also short, but specific and capacious, and everything there was tied to mutual obligations. What London fit. In our

reply, Germany's aggression against Poland was directly mentioned as possible and subject to a joint rebuff. And it was done completely in vain ... However, even this did not

suit London ... Yes, on April 17, Moscow "set up" the British in another times, and they immediately slipped us new counterproposals.

And on May 5, Molotov became People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. And already on May 14, he received the same Seeds and handed him a memorandum for

transfer to London. The note said: ***"The Soviet government carefully considered the latest proposals of the British government, handed over to the Soviet government on May 8 (and prepared by the Britons, still counting on Litvinov's NKID. -S.K.), and came to the conclusion that they cannot serve as the basis for organizing resistance front of peace-loving states against the further deployment of aggression in Europe. The motives for such a conclusion: 1. The British proposals do not contain the principle of***

reciprocity in relation to the USSR and put it in an unequal position, since they do not provide for the obligation of England and France to guarantee the USSR in the event of a direct attack on it ... "

One could only call the Anglo-French "peace-loving" with irony, but it was irony - deeply hidden, combined with genuine self-respect - that was felt in the text of the memorable

a note, the style of which betrayed at least the editing, if not the authorship of Stalin. Moscow,

without equivocation, offered London a "real barrier" against aggression: 1) the conclusion of an Anglo-French-Soviet pact of mutual assistance; 2) a three-power guarantee for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Latvia, Estonia and Finland; 3) the conclusion of a specific tripartite agreement on the forms and amounts of assistance, without which, as stated at the end of the note, "mutual assistance pacts run the risk of hanging in the air, as the experience with Czechoslovakia showed" ...

SO, Stalin finally came into European politics. AND

I was right there at the right place at the right time.

However, Stalin did not cut off the Litvinov line abruptly, but already in June 1939 went to political negotiations with London.

Why was it decided to do so? And was it worth it? Well, the author has only one answer to these questions - yes! By the beginning of May 1939, Stalin had already, of course, realized that with the Anglo-French, not only porridge, but even English tea could not be brewed ...

So with whom was it necessary to "cook" it? Clearly - with Germany! But a quick, unrestrained turn towards Germany was fraught with a loss of face, prestige, advantages and, in general, foreign policy authority. What kind of great and mighty power is this, which shied away from "peace-loving" states immediately to the "aggressor" state!

Here it was necessary to draw a line confidently and distinctively. What Stalin did, so much so that not only most of his contemporaries, but also most historians of real history simply did not understand him then. Someone about the "miscalculations" (or, conversely, about "treachery") of the leader of the USSR ranted seriously - not from a great mind ... Someone just meanly tried to denigrate him ...

But there were no miscalculations, no deceit. There was a unique success in world diplomatic history - unique in terms of accuracy and timing!

And it seems that Stalin began to prepare it about a year before the main events. For

the first time after the Nazis came to power, Lev Khinchuk was the plenipotentiary in Germany. Then in 1934 he was replaced by Yakov Surits

- also a Jew, the Germans, however, did not cause any special allergies (like Khinchuk) because of his intelligence and tact.

In 1937, Surits was transferred to Paris, and in Berlin, until the spring of 1938, the duties of charge d'affaires were performed by adviser Georgy Astakhov - he would have to deal with this periodically more than once. And in April 1938, Germany was finally appointed

full-fledged plenipotentiary - Alexei Fedorovich Merekalov ...

But who is he? The systemic essence of this figure turned out to be witness - and, as I assume, even by Merekalov himself.

However, he did not require special understanding - from him precise execution was required. And by no means Litvinov's instructions.

Merekalov was Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Trade, that is, he came from Mikoyan's department, and this already guaranteed his diligence and readiness to strictly follow Stalin's instructions transmitted outside the NKID's communication channels. Chairman of the Council of People's

Commissars Molotov informed Merekalov about his appointment on the direct instructions of Stalin, calling him to his dacha on Sunday, April 12, 1938. Merekalov refused - I don't know the language, I don't

know the situation in Germany, an experienced diplomat is needed here. However, on Monday he was summoned to a meeting of the Politburo, and Stalin personally announced that he believed in the successful fulfillment by the new plenipotentiary of his tasks in Germany. But here's the thing - Merekalov had almost no tasks for a long time.

He almost did not leave the embassy, limiting his contacts to an almost indecent minimum. However, in that "Munich" year of 1938, the Soviet Union in Europe generally tried to be obscenely ignored. So what

kind of super-tasks faced the almost inactive plenipotentiary? As I understand it, for a long time there were only three of them. Firstly, to be present in Berlin, being on "duty"

mode.

Secondly, to be worthy of Stalin's personal trust. Thirdly ...

thirdly, by the very fact of its "foreign trade" origin to show the Germans that the USSR is interested in

economic ties with the Reich.

Chief among these tasks was the task of not letting Stalin down. As we will see later, with this task of his, Merekalov more or less successful...

He was sitting in Berlin, while the European situation developed, and so that the stupidity of Litvinov's policy became more and more apparent.

Finally, the conditions for the entry into the foreign policy of Stalin and his "team" were formed. And then, in just over three months, Stalin did the following: 1. First, he

replaced the head of foreign policy. And he changed it in such a way that it became clear to everyone - this is not an ordinary personnel transfer, but a

complete change of course. Nevertheless, there was no apparent change in course - and without the Anglophile Max, contacts with London remained. At the same time, there was no particular warming in relations with Berlin ei

2. Without formally abandoning Litvinov's line on a bloc with "peace-loving" states, Stalin allowed them, during the August military negotiations, to reach a logical point, that is, to expose the obvious fact that they were not going to be allies of the USSR. 3. At the same time, Stalin made it possible for pan-

Poland to demonstrate in full glory political cretinism, simply amazing in its completeness, ideally combined with the complete absence of anxiety about the Poland of the people, and not the Poland of the "arrogant" pans. 4. By negotiating with the West, Stalin objectively provided Hitler with a constant

headache. After all, the military alliance of the West with the USSR broke all plans for solving the problem of Danzig and the "corridor". And now Hitler himself had to strive to settle relations with the USSR. And we needed good relations with the Germans already for economic reasons - not even taking pure politics into account.

The timing was almost perfect. By mid-August (I have already spoken about this a little earlier and will add something later), the Anglo-French had exposed themselves at the Moscow military negotiations, and Hitler was, as they say, "ready" to conclude a Pact with us. And on their own initiative.

If I do not applaud Stalin, it is only because he is not an actor. If I do not take off my hat to him, it is only because I do not like and do not wear hats. I am simply proud of

Stalin, of my great compatriot, who knew how to be naturally great (that is, natural and simple) in everything - from a letter from his daughter to a masterful unraveling of Litvin's clumsy knots. AT THE BEGINNING of summer, this unraveling was just beginning. On June 8,

1939, Halifax invited Ivan Mikhailovich Maisky to the Foreign Office and said: - The British government would very much like to

come to an agreement between the three powers.

Maisky could only nod his head in agreement, for Halifax, apparently, was not going to stop and led on:

- To this end, we would consider it expedient to switch to a slightly different method of negotiations, namely: instead of exchanging notes at a distance, which inevitably causes loss of time, we would like to have a conversation with you at a "round table" in Moscow, discussing point by point the draft agreements and finding formulations acceptable to all. "I will urgently convey this proposal to Moscow, but I am almost sure

of a positive answer," the plenipotentiary put in a word. - And who will negotiate on your part?

Halifax hesitated, then replied, "Actually, we're empowering Seeds, but he's sick with influenza right now and we can't get him to London for a briefing... So..." "Because of that?" "That's why we're sending Strang to you..."

"Strang?! Maisky could not contain his surprise. -

Yes! He is aware of the details of our written exchanges

and is very skilled in editing all kinds of diplomatic documents and formulas ... -

When should we expect him? - We expect that he will leave for Moscow at the beginning of the next

weeks.

- That is, the number of the twelfth-fourteenth? "Yes...

So, for direct negotiations in Moscow, London sent not a bright, prominent figure of the Foreign Office, but an experienced chicaner — the head of the Central European (!) Department.

And if it were only a matter of the insignificance of the position of the British delegate! But the trick was that William Strang had a very definite reputation in the Foreign Office. He was so committed to the idea of playing off the USSR and the Reich that his colleagues scoffed at his address "Strang nach Osten" ...

Even in the West, Strang's appointment was once said as follows: "His arrival in Moscow is a triple insult to the Soviet Union, because Strang was a person of low diplomatic rank, acted as a defender of a group of British engineers caught in Soviet Russia in espionage (available *in mind the case of the beginning of the thirties about the Metropolitan Vickers Electric Export JSC.* - S. K.), and was a member of the group of employees who accompanied Chamberlain to Munich. In fairness, it must be said that in the early thirties,

Strang, working in Moscow, gave information to London that was sufficiently objective and benevolent for us, and in Munich he was on official duty. But his insignificance for such an assignment was really blatant and defiant, as was his unequivocal anti-Sovietism by the end of the thirties ... Later, on July 23, Lloyd George was indignant in a public speech: "Lord Halifax visited Hitler and

Goering. Chamberlain went into the arms of the Fuhrer three times in a row ... Why was only a Foreign Office official sent to represent us in a much more powerful country that offers us its help?

The "lion of English politics" himself answered his own question: "Only one answer can be given to this. Mr Neville Chamberlain, Lord Halifax and Sir Simon do not want an alliance with

Russia." Lloyd George's statement on 23 July directly contradicted Halifax's on 8 June, but the former was correct, not the latter. Incidentally, Maisky, in his report to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs about his conversation with Halifax

on June 8, concluded: "***During the conversation, Halifax briefly mentioned that ... someone advised him to go to Moscow himself ... but that h***

a principled opponent of the frequent and lengthy (yes! - S. K.) absences of the Minister of Foreign Affairs from the country ... "If you

are already getting out to Berchtesgaden to see Hitler, then the path to the Moscow Kremlin with Stalin is not far ... And Halifax's explanations were more than unconvincing . Nevertheless, on June 10,

Molotov sent Maisky a cipher, the "fish" of which was most likely written by Stalin: **"Inform Halifax in response to his**

statement the following: 1) We take note of the decision of the British government on

Strang's assignment to Moscow;

.....

4) with regard to Halifax's statement that someone advised him to go to Moscow, you can hint that Moscow would welcome his arrival. However, Halifax did not appear in Moscow, and only

Strang arrived there (he did make his campaign "nach Osten"). And not so much the personal likes and dislikes of this negotiator as his low status pre-programmed the very "sour" results of the "round table" with him. SOMETIMES, reading the diplomatic correspondence of those years reveals such details of the era that you simply wonder!

It seems that everything was clear to a person ... But in general, the same document, which contains accurate estimates and forecasts, turns out to be evidence of amazing lack of insight ... On March 16 and 19, 1939, the fifty-four-year-old French ambassador to Germany, Robert Coulondre, sent the fifty-year-old French Foreign

Minister Georges Etienne Bonn two letters...

Coulondr was in the diplomatic service from the age of twenty-four, from 1909, he began as a consul in Morocco, in the twenties he was connected with the problem of German reparations, participated in the development of the American Young Plan for Germany ... He was certainly intelligent, experienced, good at writing, and his letters to Bonnet are read with interest. The day before the writing of the first

letter, Coulondre appeared at the German Foreign Ministry - Ausamt. There he was received by the State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, Weizsäcker.

The Wehrmacht entered the Czech Republic on the morning of that day, and Kulondre was excited:

- Mr. Secretary of State, I was strongly affected by the entry of your troops into Prague ...

- And what's the matter? Everything went smoothly, the Czechs were doing "heil"... - But this also means that the Munich Agreement can be thrown into the dustbin!

- For what? It bears the signatures of our Fuhrer and your Daladier... - But this

entry contradicts Munich, contradicts the relations of trust that I seem to have met with you, and, finally, contradicts the goals of my mission here... - Mister Coulondre! Weizsäcker replied sharply and

irritably. - As you know, the Fuhrer in his speech on January 30 said that Central Europe is an area where the Western powers have nothing to do ... And I would ask you not to lecture us. Munich contains two elements: the preservation of peace and the disinterest of France in Eastern affairs. "But..." "Let France finally turn her eyes to the West, to her empire, and stop talking about matters

in which her participation, as experience suggests, does not contribute to the cause of peace..."

I would call the German's answer exemplary for a truly national diplomacy of business patriots, and not saloon shamblers. He was harsh, but true to the point, but Kulondre was knocked out of his usual rut. And - excited by yesterday - he sat down on March 16 at his desk to write this: **"The operation, the victim of which Czechoslovakia has just become a victim** (exact statement - "Czech Republic. - S.K.), to an even greater extent than previous acts of violence of the Nazis (what the ambassador meant here is difficult to understand, because the Anschluss of Austria was voluntary, and the inclusion of the Sudetenland in the Reich was fair. - S.K.), is marked by specific **signs of Hitler's actions: cynicism and treachery of the plan, secrecy of preparation** (in the same letter, the ambassador stated that **"already at the beginning of February, the embassy noted numerous signs indicating the intentions of the Reich in relation to Czechoslovakia"**, so that

I don't understand what kind of "secrecy" are you talking about? - S.K.), ***cruelty performance...***"

Coulondre, a diplomat of the second colonial empire of the world, attributed to Berlin ***"the morality preached by gangsters and jungle dwellers,"*** and ended his long message as follows: ***"The interests of national security, as well as the interests of world peace, require the French people to make great efforts in terms of discipline and mobilization of all the possibilities of the country; only this will allow France, with the support of her friends, to establish her position and defend her interests in the face of such a serious adversary as Adolf Hitler's Germany, now striving to conquer Europe."*** The second letter of March 19 was less emotional, but analytical - with a very detailed analysis of the situation in Germany, in Germany and around Germany ...

Coulondra was especially indignant at the fact that in the autumn of 1938 in Munich Hitler declared the absolute impossibility of the coexistence of ethically heterogeneous groups of Czechs and Germans, and in the spring of 1939 he transformed the Czech Republic into an imperial protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

But the Czechs, who had long been accustomed to living under the conditions of supreme German power as part of Austria, reacted quite calmly to the fact that from now on they live under supreme German power, which no longer comes from Vienna, but from Berlin ... Even the same Emil Hakha, who in as president elected by the Czechs themselves, he placed the fate of the Czechs who elected him in the hands of the Fuhrer.

The Czechs simply mourned the loss of "independence" given to them by the States and Versailles, without revealing a national intention to fight for its restoration. The Slovaks were quite pleased with the newly acquired (yes - with the assistance of Berlin)

independence from the Czechs.

And realizing this in advance - even before the start of the "Czech" combination - Hitler could not resist the temptation to bloodlessly solve two serious problems at once in his favor. In Coulondra's letter, this was

stated as follows: ***"Germany, all of whose foreign exchange resources were almost completely used up, laid a hand on a large part of the gold and foreign exchange reserves of the Czech Bank of Issue. Received by such***

Thus, the amount (\$50 million) is a very valuable support for a country that was almost completely deprived of funds for international payments. Even more important is the fact

that Germany got its hands on a significant amount of first-class weapons (which the Czechs did not want to use against Germany. - S.K.), ***as well as Skoda factories. These world-famous enterprises supplied weapons not only to Czechoslovakia, but also to Romania and Yugoslavia*** (and even the USSR. - S.K.) ... ***Let me remind you in passing that the Skoda factories supplied aircraft engines for us ... We should not underestimate the new opportunities Reich to acquire by selling arms abroad valuable to him***

currencies."

Yes, all the gold in the world was then mainly in America and the "democratic" West. And Germany's gold reserves were significantly smaller even than those of Italy and "pulled" no more than 30 miserable million dollars (by the summer of 1939, the United States had gold coin reserves of 28.5 billion dollars - 62% of the total amount available to the West). That is, the "golden" increase due to the Czechs was very significant and timely for the

Reich - like the "steel" increase due to the Skoda ... ***and South-Eastern Europe, and perhaps the Scandinavian countries, thereby securing ... the resources***

of these areas and the opportunity ... to prepare to resist the blockade, or else attack France and England before these powers, with the support of America (allocation here, as well as below - mine. - S.K.) will be able to reach or exceed the level of armament of the Reich and, in particular, deprive it of air superiority "... As you can see, the Frenchman thought quite sensibly, and, if you think about it, he himself In a confidential letter, Bonnet admitted that the "democratic powers" themselves were driving Germany and Hitler "into a corner" with their military preparations and under the ranting about

peace is already being considered - and how they will block Germany from the sea ...

And what's interesting! Coulondre's first letter of March 16 ended with hope in the "friends" of France - without deciphering who exactly is meant. But the second - a detailed, comprehensively considering the situation - the letter did not differ in this sense from the first ...

There was not even a hint of the USSR as the most important for France as a potential ally.

True, the "Kremlin" was mentioned in the second letter. But not Moscow, but Prague ... Before that, I kept silent that from 1936 to 1938 Coulondr was ambassador to Moscow, after which he was appointed to Berlin. And with such a track record, he did not even say a few words about the urgent need for France to have the closest and most effective military alliance with Russia. We, the Russians, needed this union then,

like a fifth wheel in a cart ... But for the French, it was vitally important! And they preferred not to admit it point-blank. N-yes ... So who did Coulondru see in "friends"? Well the last

a paragraph of a letter from the Berlin ambassador of France stated:

"Regarding the fickleness of the Hitlerite leaders and the intoxication of success in which the Führer must now be, as well as the anxiety and irritation caused by the rearmament of the democratic powers across the Rhine and the position of the United States (in another place of the letter it is said that "observing everything with great excitement and deaf irritation ... behind the rearmament measures of France, England and America , the leaders of the Reich may wonder how long they will have air superiority ... " etc. - S. K.), I believe that we must immediately proceed in the most resolute manner, maintaining as much secrecy as possible, to mobilize the country's industry." In brackets, I note that for France, as we see, Coulondre did not consider the regime of secrecy to be shameful ... But this is me - as a passing remark ...

But it's not at all casual to note the revealing fact that the "state" ears of the Republican Donkey and the Democratic Elephant were already visible in European politics ... They were seen, if not publicly, then in the secret correspondence of European politicians ... And these ears pricked up towards Europe more and more insistently, although Uncle Sam and President Roosevelt loudly declared the unchanging "isolationism" of the United States ... Well, well ... Maybe it

was so ... But after all, Coulondre, who has been closely associated with US capital since the days of working on the Young Plan, also knew what wrote...

And WHAT was going on in Berlin outside the walls of the French embassy at that time? In

Berlin, for example, a German-Italian treaty of friendship and cooperation, the so-called "Steel Pact", was concluded. It was a clear and intelligible document establishing a complete political, diplomatic, military-political, military and military-economic union of the two countries. On the German side, it was signed by Joachim

von Ribbentrop,
side of Italy - his colleague Galeazzo Ciano.

The "Pact of Steel" was concluded on May 22, 1939, from the Nativity of Christ and, as it was recorded, "in the 17th year of the Fascist Era" ... A year and a half earlier, on November 6, 1937, Italy joined the political union that became known as the "Anti-Comintern Pact" and which was first concluded by Germany and Japan on November 25, 1936 ... The author must inform the reader that this agreement

is often (and quite incorrectly) defined as anti-Soviet. But here is what was said in a conversation between People's Commissar Litvinov and the Polish Ambassador Grzybowski on April 4, 1939.

Appearing at Litvinov's on his own initiative, Grzybowski began with reproaches:

"I have to act as your plenipotentiary, Mr. People's Commissar, and convey your requests to the Polish government."

Max Litvinov did not stand on ceremony with the Poles, and therefore almost immediately asked the question "on the forehead":

- Did you tell the British that Poland refuses to participate in combinations directed against the USSR? Grzybowski handed the People's

Commissar the Times and Tan and showed them the places where Poland rejected three German demands: about Danzig, about building an extraterritorial motorway through the "corridor" and about joining Poland to the Anti-Comintern Pact ... - Well, are these newspaper reports true? ? Max asked. "These newspapers are usually well informed," the Pole said evasively.

- And you? Grzybowski, again without answering directly, mumbled that, they say, Poland's negative attitude towards the Anti-Comintern Pact is well known to Western European states and participants

pact.

Do they only know this from the newspapers? asked Litvinov caustically. "No," Grzybowski replied

gloomily. - They know it from Polish government.

"So, Mr. Grzybowski, then you should also know that the Anti-Comintern Pact is by no means directed against the USSR or exclusively against it, but also against England, France and even America ... Grzybowski wanted to say something, but Litvinov, who did not suffer from reflection categorically summed up: - This

is proved by the dispute that is currently being waged between the participants in the pact, each of whom wants the edge of the pact to be directed against the enemy most interesting to him ...

- But Poland ... - Grzybowski again wanted to insert something, but Litvinov (and here even I will say "thank you!" to him for this!) just "printed" the "honor" pan: "We know that at one time Poland was ready to join and even led a

corresponding agitation for the so-called pact of five, consisting of England, France, Germany, Italy and Poland, fully aware that such a combination would be directed against the USSR ...

- But after all, when it is necessary, Poland will turn to the USSR for help ...

She can apply when it's too late. It's unlikely for us the position of the general automatic reserve is acceptable ...

Litvinov's European "democratic friends" had already "thrown" him then, and that is why he was so harsh (it was too late for him personally). But in his sharp frankness, he was certainly right. Russia really should not be a "lifesaver" for pans, monsieurs and sirs ... Especially since Hitler's Anti-Comintern Pact with Tokyo and Rome was by no means directed against the USSR as a state. The "steel" pact is even more so... On May 22, the Germans entered into a military

alliance with Italy, and on May 23...

And on MAY 23, Hitler held a meeting in the Reich Chancellery with the leadership of the Wehrmacht, the Luftwaffe and the Kriegsmarine. Gathered in his office were Field Marshal Goering, Grand

Admiral Raeder, Colonel General von Brauchitsch, Colonel General Keitel, Colonel General Milch, Artillery General Halder, General Bodenschatz, Rear Admiral Schniewind, Colonel Eschonnek (the young chief of staff of the Luftwaffe), Colonel of the General Staff Warlimont, Lieutenant Colonel of the General Staff Schmundt, Captain Engel, Corvette Captain Albrecht (soon he was to lead the forces of the Navy allocated for the Polish campaign), Captain von Below.

The protocol of the meeting with the agenda: "Information on the political situation and tasks" was led by the Fuhrer's chief adjutant Schmundt ... Hitler was

confident, specific and convincing. - Lord! - he

began ... - On the one hand, during the period from 1933 to 1939, our internal situation is characterized by successes in all areas. Our military situation has improved tremendously. On the other hand, our position in the surrounding world remains

unchanged...

In the office, where attentive silence reigned, the rustling of tight uniforms began. Everyone was surprised - what about the entrance to the Rhineland, the success of the Saar plebiscite, the Anschluss, the Sudetenland, Prague, Memel?

However, Hitler immediately explained:

- Germany was excluded from the circle of powerful states, and formally little has changed here. The balance of power was established without the participation of Germany. Now we are entering this circle and already by this we are disturbing the balance. Any, even vital, our claims are considered as an "invasion" ... Moreover, the British are more afraid of our economic superiority than an ordinary threat of force ...

The Fuhrer surveyed those present with an attentive look of cold blue eyes and continued:

"Eighty million Germans have solved spiritual problems. However, economic problems remain acute, and courage is required to solve them. Yes, gentlemen, courage, because only cowards adapt to circumstances, but the brave adapts circumstances to their needs! The tight uniforms rustled approvingly, and the Fuhrer raised

voice:

- We made good use of the time ... The national-political unification of the Germans is almost completed. However, we are faced with a choice: rise or fall. Fifteen, twenty years, and the issue of living space, commensurate with the greatness of the state, will have to be addressed! And not a single German statesman can evade this question any longer...

Approval echoed through the office again, but there was tension in it as well. Hitler caught on to this, but his tone was still cheerful:

- Today we are in a state of recovery, as well as our friends - Italy and Japan. Poland is in decline... So, **the word** was spoken... And now

even the slightest rustle did not break the silence of the Reich Chancellor's office, which turned to the main current issue: - Poland will always stand on the side of our opponents. Yes, we have a pact with her, but she

always thinks about how to use any opportunity against us. And the problem of Poland cannot be separated from the problem of confrontation with the West. It's not about Danzig... If fate forces us to face the West, then it's good to have a vast fertile area in the East with a low population density. German solid farming will give

a huge increase in production ... In this regard, I must warn you - we should not rely on a gift in the form of colonies, even if they give us one. This is not a solution to the food problem, because a naval blockade is capable of undermining everything here. So the solution is in Poland. The internal stability of Poland in relation to Bolshevism is doubtful. Therefore, Poland is a dubious barrier against Russia as well. The Polish regime will not withstand its pressure...

The uniforms again could not stand it, since another main **word** was uttered - "Russia" ... However, the Fuhrer did not linger on it and continued the "Polish" topic: - It is impossible

to get around the Polish question! Only one thing remains - at the first suitable opportunity to attack Poland. Yes, things will come to a fight, there is nothing to think about repeating the Czech version. And there is no certainty that in the course of a German-Polish clash, war with the West is ruled

out... Hitler fell silent, thought for a moment and decisively summed up: "Then the fight should be waged primarily against England and France, although success lies in excluding the West from the game and to isolate Poland... This is a

matter of clever politics... Yes, much depended on politics in 1939, for the guns were still silent. Hitler explained that he doubted the possibility of a peaceful

settlement with England: - England sees in our development laying the foundations of that hegemony that will deprive her of strength. And that is why England is our enemy. A collision with her will be not for life, but for death. You, gentlemen, are military people, and any armed forces should strive for a short war, but the state leadership is obliged to prepare for a war lasting from 10 to

15 years ... The generals and others looked at each other across the table without much enthusiasm, and the Fuhrer

nodded understandingly and said: - Of course, a sudden attack can lead to a quick outcome. However, relying only on surprise would be criminal, because treason, ordinary chance, human stupidity, and even mere weather conditions can interfere here ... Although, of course, - the Fuhrer nodded his head again, - one must strive for a crushing blow, not taking into account the observance of agreements. Weapons are more important, but ...

Hitler was already a little tired, took a breath, and even somehow tired stated: - But

any weapon is of decisive importance, as long as you have an advantage in it - from gases to aviation. By the forty-first year, we will not have an advantage in the air over the British. But tanks will be effective against the Poles, since they have no anti-tank defense. However, even if there is no advantage in weapons, - a fire flashed in the eyes of the Fuhrer, - success comes from its sudden and ingenious use ... It turned out that everything was basically clear with

Poland ... But with Russia? Answering a question not expressed by attentively listening uniforms, the Fuhrer explained:

- Economic relations with Russia are possible only with the improvement of political relations. So far, a cautious position is found in the comments of the press. It is possible that Russia will consider the defeat of Poland undesirable for her. And if the Russians continue to act against us, then our relations with Japan may become closer ...

RELATIONS between the two countries were not so simple. Japan did not fight Germany in the same way that it fought Russia in 1904-1905, but Japan "fought" Germany in the First World War. All this "war" was limited,

however, to the fact that Japan, after hesitation, declared war on the Reich of Wilhelm II, tempted by the possibility of capturing the German base in coastal China - Qingdao (Kia-Chao). After a short blockade and a sluggish assault, Qingdao was taken, and the fighting between the two empires was limited to this.

Before the "conservative Meiji revolution" of 1867, Japan retained an almost feudal appearance, and before its violent "opening" by the squadron of the American Commodore Perry, it was completely feudal. Almost three centuries of

self-isolation have formed a very peculiar society and a peculiar national character. And they turned out to be such that they made Japan and the Japanese capable of surprisingly dynamic civilizational breakthroughs.

Those who lagged behind, willy-nilly, must use the experience of those who have gone ahead. And Japan managed to do it with talent and cleverness. And one of the samples was just Kaiser's Germany. The Japanese army was built according to the Prussian model, and Bismarck was the idol of

the Japanese reformers. The incident with Qingdao, however, did not particularly spoil anything, especially since Japan, although it was among the victorious countries, constantly felt the neglect of the Anglo-Saxon "allies" even after that. They strongly pushed the Japanese out of their captured positions in China and pressed them at the Washington Conference of 1921-1922 with two treaties - the Pact of Four (USA, Great Britain, France and Japan) and the Pact of Nine (Italy, Belgium, Holland, Portugal and China). The third treaty was especially hated for the Land of the Rising Sun - the Pact of Five (USA, Great Britain, Japan, France and Italy), according to which the following ratio of the maximum tonnage of the linear fleet was established - 5: 5: 3: 1.75: 1.75 ...

In December 1934, Japan abandoned the Pact of Five and demanded the right to equalize its fleet with those of the Anglo-Saxons. A year later, a naval conference opened in London, but Japan failed to achieve anything there either, and at the beginning of 1936 she left the conference ...

So, like Germany, they tried to discriminate against Japan. In addition, like Germany, Japan left the League of Nations in the thirties ... And there were similar points in their situation ... And even "hot" ones ... In the early thirties, both German and Japanese societies were in crisis. The Germans found a way out in nationalism, the Japanese in further militarization. However, while in Germany

the internal political situation stabilized, in Japan in the mid-1930s the opposite happened. In 1934, in the vast northern region of Tohoku, only according to official data, 700,000 peasants were starving on the verge of starvation. Due to poverty, more than 60,000 girls were sold to brothels. Japan, in an unusual mass size for it, if not "blushed", then "turned pink" ...

On February 20, 1936, the Minseito party won the elections to the Japanese parliament, opposing the group of the militarist General Araki, associated with the "new" concerns. The Minseito increased the number of seats in parliament from 146 to 205. The seiyukai (essentially Arakist) party, instead of the previous 303, won only 171 seats.

And even the shakai taishuto party, which gravitated towards left-wing democracy, won 18 seats instead of the 5 it

had previously. And a few days after the election, a group of young officers mutinied ... it was not a revolution, but a major "showdown" among various groups of the military. One of the first victims of a series of brutal murders was the seventy-eight-year-old former prime minister and Lord Privy Seal, Admiral Makoto Saito. Saito was a reactionary of the highest order, but the reactionary putschists did not spare him, because the admiral was considered an opponent of the "young officers".

The main force of the putschists were units of the Third Infantry Division stationed in Tokyo. One and a half thousand soldiers occupied the streets of the capital, the parliament building, the military ministry (a hundred meters from which was the German embassy with Ambassador Dirksen and the military attache General Ott), the main police

department ... The eighty-six-year-old Minister of Finance Takahashi, the chief inspector of military training, was killed in front of their wives General

Watanabe. The chief chamberlain of the emperor, Admiral Suzuki, received a head wound.

Premier Okada himself survived only thanks to the self-sacrifice of his son-in-law, a naval officer, who was killed instead of his father-in-law. The influential Count Mackinac also escaped, thanks to the courage of

his granddaughter. The putsch lasted three and a half days. The masses did not support him, tank units of the "loyalists" were brought up in Tokyo, and a direct imperial order to the rebels was scattered from the planes to lay down their arms and obey their

superiors. Thirteen captains and lieutenants were sentenced to death and executed in the presence of judges and the real instigators of the putsch - senior

officers. One judge went mad, one committed suicide. Okada's cabinet was replaced by that of Hirota, the former foreign minister.

On this, the Japanese crisis was roughly overcome.

As for Japanese-German relations, back in December 1935, Ribbentrop and the Japanese military attache in Berlin, Colonel Oshima, began mutual soundings with the aim of rapprochement.

In November 1936, Germany and Japan signed a pact that became known as the "anti-Comintern"... HITLER

highly valued the "Japanese" line of his promising policy, but Tokyo was far away, and Moscow was not just closer. If Germany bordered Poland from the east, then Russia bordered Poland from the west, and to isolate Poland meant in many ways to isolate it from Russia. At the same time, Russia's separation from a possible alliance with the Anglo-French meant both an increase in the chances of isolating Poland, and in general the likelihood of success in a conflict with the West.

It was necessary to improve relations with Russia, at least in a tactical perspective. And possibly strategic. Two principles fought in Hitler: rationalistic Apollonian and Dionysian, unrestrained emotional ...

A sober geopolitician fought in it with an anti-communist ideologue. The first was ready - under certain conditions - to orient the Germans towards an alliance with Russia, which successfully complements Germany. The second could not imagine himself without a mortal struggle with her, who

chose communism. But the Fuhrer thought a lot about Russia, and thought not stupidly ... Already in Mein Kampf, he analyzed the possible directions of Germany's European policy in the period before the First World War and wrote this: "Germany could only pursue a policy of conquering new lands in Europe in alliance with England **against Russia** (at that time Russian Poland was also part of Russia. - S.K.), **but on the contrary, Germany could only pursue a policy of conquering colonies and strengthening its world trade with Russia against England ...** Since Germany has embarked on a policy of increased industrialization and increased development of trade, then, in essence, there was no longer the slightest reason to fight with Russia. Only the worst enemies of both nations were interested in such enmity arising (emphasis here and below is mine. - S.K.). ... **I do not forget all the impudent threats that Pan-Slavist Russia dared systematically shower on Germany. I don't forget trials**

mobilizations that Russia resorted to in order to infringe on Germany. However, just before the start of the war, we still had a second road: we could rely on Russia against England. Much has changed

since the turn of the century. Nevertheless, the general characterization of the past was also suitable for the future. In addition, Hitler then, in the 1920s, considered two options in Chapter XIV: the future war of Germany in alliance with Europe against Russia and ***the war of Germany in alliance with Russia against Europe!***

A possible union with Russia was then theoretically rejected by him, but for reasons not ideological, but quite logical - Soviet Russia at the time of writing Mein Kampf was still very weak.

Here is the course of Hitler's reasoning: ***“Between Germany and Russia is the Polish state, which is entirely in the hands of France. In the event of a war between Germany and Russia against Western Europe, Russia, before sending at least one soldier to the German front, would have to endure a victorious struggle with Poland.*** But was a

potential ally of Germany capable of such a thing? Hitler answered this question as follows: ***“From a purely military point of view, a war between Germany and Russia against Western Europe (or rather, in this case, against the whole world) would be a real disaster for us. After all, the whole struggle would have played out not on Russian, but on German territory, and Germany would not even be able to count on serious support from Russia ...***

There is no need to talk about Russia as a serious technical factor in the war. The general motorization of the world, which will play a colossal and decisive role in the next war, we could do almost nothing to oppose. Germany itself has ignominiously lagged behind in this important area. But in the event of war, she would still have to support Russia from her little, because Russia still does not have a single plant of its own that could really make, say, a real living truck. What kind of war would that be? We would have been simply beaten. The mere fact of the conclusion of an alliance between Germany and Russia would mean the inevitability of a future war, the outcome of which is predetermined: the end of Germany.

That is why an alliance with the new Russia then seemed impossible to Hitler. However, already in 1931, about one-third, and in 1932, about half of all world (!) exports of machinery and equipment were sent to the USSR. And by the end of the 1930s, Stalin's Russia had already transformed

itself into a powerful industrial power. And to enter into an honest alliance with it could already be considered an honor and benefit by any reasonably behaving state.

Hitler understood this well and already in the spring of 1933 he spoke Khinchuk, then our plenipotentiary representative in Berlin, read this:

“Both of our states must recognize the steadfastness of the facts of mutual existence for a long time and proceed from this in their actions ... Regardless of the difference in worldviews, we are connected by mutual interests, and this connection is of a long-term nature. And I mean both economic and political. We have the same difficulties and enemies... You must take care of your western border, we - about the east... Germany has a difficult economic situation, but it is not easy for the Soviets either. I think we should always remember that both countries can complement each other and provide mutual services. What would the fall of the National Socialist government mean for Germany? Disaster! And the fall of Soviet power for Russia? Same! In this case, both states would not be able to maintain their independence. And what would come of it? This would have led to nothing else than sending a new tsar to Russia from Paris. And Germany in such a case would perish as a state.

Six years have passed since Hitler's conversation with Khinchuk... Over the years, Hitler has been repeatedly called a bloody executioner in the Soviet press, portrayed as a jackal, and so on... The German press did not remain in debt either, calling for an end to Bolshevism and grossly insulting Stalin personally (“Völkischer beobachter published such articles even in the spring of 1939). Yes, there was everything, but ... But one phrase

in the Fuhrer's speech to

the generals on May 23 was just a repetition of what Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, had told German Ambassador Schulenburg three days before.

Appearing at Molotov's on May 20, the ambassador almost immediately began to assure him that there was a desire on the part of Germany to conclude a trade agreement...

"We get the impression that the German government, instead of businesslike economic negotiations, is playing a game of sorts," Molotov told him. - It's your right, but then you should look for another country as a partner, and we are not going to participate in this kind of game ... - It's not about the game, Mr. Molotov. We really would like to regulate

our economic relations," Schulenburg objected. "And we would like to send Schnurre to you for negotiations with Mr. Mikoyan..."

- Your "famous" Schnurre? "Yes... I meant Karl

Julius Schnurre, head of the Eastern European referent office of the economic policy department of the ausamt, an expert on Russia and a master of negotiations. Schulenburg was waiting for an answer,

and it was then that Molotov said what

the Fuhrer repeated for three days:

- We came to the conclusion that for the success of economic negotiations, an appropriate political base must be created ... - What does this mean? the German

immediately jumped up. "We and the German government need to think about this. "So, as I understand it," Schulenburg returned to the topic of negotiations, "at present there are no favorable conditions for Schnurre to come to Moscow?" — I repeat: economic negotiations should

precede the creation of an appropriate political base.

Schulenburg really wanted to get concrete explanations from Molotov about the "political base", but he evaded concretization. And Schulenburg, immediately after his visit

to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, got in touch with Berlin ... And the

thought of Molotov (actually Stalin, of course), expressed in Moscow on May 20, already on May 23, Hitler repeated as his own. Moreover, before the generals, he referred to cautious

press comments, although he was clearly referring to the caution demonstrated by the Soviet leadership. What did it mean? Of course, the fact that Hitler was already monitoring contacts with the USSR

in the mode, as they say now, "continuous monitoring", that is, daily. And more and more he began to think in the way that Moscow, that is, Stalin, wanted. For the first time, Hitler using the Kremlin's wording was, perhaps, April 1... And it was by no means an April Fool's joke. On that day, the battleship Tirpitz was launched in

Wilhelmshaven, and the Fuhrer made a big speech ^{took advantage} there. Leaving none of the listeners in any doubt about their determination to finally put an end to the dictates of Versailles (and this meant solving the last sore point - "Polish"), the Fuhrer emphasized that there are strong German cultural roots in Eastern Europe, about which, they say, English statesmen

have no idea.

For a long time and peacefully, two peoples in Eastern Europe were connected - German and Russian. There could be no talk of any serious commonality with the Poles - for nothing that the Polish, say Poznan, landlords zealously licked everything that was accepted in such cases for the Prussian authorities. lick.

So the hint was made. What a hint! In the same speech, Hitler went further and declared: "If someone tells me today that there are no philosophical or ideological differences between England and Soviet Russia, then I will only answer: congratulations ... I think it will very soon become clear how great the difference between democratic Great Britain and Stalin's Bolshevik Russia. Hitler went even further and ... actually quoted Stalin to confirm his own thoughts. On March 10, at the 18th Party Congress, Stalin urged: "Be careful and not let our country be drawn into conflicts by military provocateurs who are accustomed to raking in the heat with the wrong hands."

The Western press immediately noted this idea of the General Secretary of the CPSU (b) and called the speech at the congress "chestnut", because the Russian expression "rake the heat with the wrong hands" in English

language (and German too) corresponds to the idiom (that is, an untranslatable expression) "to force others to carry chestnuts for themselves from the fire" ...

There is reason to believe that at that time Hitler was familiar with Stalin's speech only from Western newspaper reports. Only on May 5, during his meeting with Ribbentrop and adviser Hilger, who had come from Moscow, did the Führer, to his surprise, learn from Hilger that Stalin had stated in his speech that there were no apparent reasons for the conflict between the USSR and Germany. But he read Western newspapers, and on April 1, in three

weeks

after the "chestnut" speech, Hitler suddenly said:

"He who is ready to drag chestnuts out of the fire for the Western powers will burn his fingers. It was

both a hint and a warning... So far, however,

Litvinov still ruled in Moscow in the mansion of the People's Commissariat of Foreign

Affairs. However, the spring winds blew mustiness not only from yearning for fresh air from Moscow apartments sealed for the winter, but also from Soviet foreign policy.

This policy in April and already at the beginning of May had not only two different official leaders, Litvinov and Molotov, but also differed fundamentally, if not in their actions, then in their tendencies.

At the end of March 1939, the chief quartermaster of the General Staff of the German Land Forces, General Kurt von Tippelskirch, asked the military attache in Moscow, General Kestring, about the possibility of Stalin's "other" actions. Other actions meant, of course, joint actions against Poland. "For what reason? Koestring replied to Berlin. - Is it in place?

Stalin, would you have acted differently?

The answer of the sixty-three-year-old Kestring did not testify to the breadth of his views, even though he was a native of Moscow. Kestring knew the Russian language very well, highly appreciated the Russian soldier, but at the same time believed that the Russians should be actively involved in the fight against the communist regime (here he coincided with the views of the ex-general Denikin). That is, unlike Hitler, Kestring was not only an anti-communist, but also an anti-Soviet.

However, Tippelskirch's request was indicative - the German military, judging by it, was by no means rushing into the "Drang nach Osten" in which Strang nach Osten would like to establish them. Perhaps the conversation

between Secretary of State Weizsäcker and Soviet Plenipotentiary Merekalov on April 17, 1939 could have become a turning point. In fact, this was only their second meeting (the first took place in ausamt on July 6, 1938, before the presentation of credentials to Merekalov). I have already spoken about the essence of Merekalov's Berlin mission. He is long time was "in reserve", but now it was time for his actions.

After the conversation with Weizsäcker, the plenipotentiary almost immediately left for Moscow together with the military apache, and on April 19 our plenipotentiary in London, Maisky, also went there.

The plenipotentiaries were on their way to a government meeting in the Politburo, which was being convened to discuss the question of a tripartite mutual assistance pact and the prospects for concluding it. And it, which took place in the Kremlin, put something in its place for Stalin. And at the same time, it actually put an end to Litvinov and his politics.

After the meeting, Merekalov did not return to Berlin, and Astakhov replaced him as charge d'affaires. He was not used to doing this! As we remember, on April 17, Litvinov handed over to the

British ambassador

Seeds is our very loyal response to London's proposals.

And on April 17, the Soviet plenipotentiary came to the German ausamt. That this was not done on Litvinov's instructions is beyond doubt. And if something was prescribed to Merekalov from the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, then only regarding the clarification of the incident at the Skoda factories. At Skoda, still Czech,

they produced for us two anti-aircraft guns, an artillery fire control system, prototypes of guns - with the supply of drawings, as well as forgings of artillery systems. In March of the 39th, Skoda became an element of the German war economy. And in April, Lieutenant General Barkhausen of the military commission in Prague suspended our orders, and the conflict dragged on for a month. Only on May 5, Shnurre informed Astakhov that everything had been settled and the contracts would be

completed.

Merekalov and started with Skoda. The conversation revolved around her and further, and only at the end he moved on to larger topics ...

Seemingly jokingly, the German
threw: - There are rumors about the upcoming Russian-English-French military air pact, and you order anti-aircraft guns from us. This is hardly an opportune moment for our military supplies to Russia. Merekalov - also as if by chance - asked: - And what - are the guns ready to speak? - Well, now everyone is mobilizing, even Holland, Belgium, Switzerland .. Germany has not called anyone above the norm ... Although it could do a lot in this regard. However, as far as I know, Germany is now the only country in Europe that does not saber-rattling. — Even in the

direction of Poland? Or are you ready to negotiate with her? “Oh, we have been negotiating with the Poles for three months already on the transfer of Danzig and the construction of an extraterritorial highway through the “Polish” corridor in exchange for our guarantees of the Polish western border, but England is creating a nervous atmosphere ... Merekalov was not a professional diplomat, especially of the Litvinov school. And, obviously, that's why he asked Weizsäcker the question that the "Litvinian" would never have asked. However, it must be assumed that the question was asked within the framework of the task assigned to him, but again - not by Litvinov, but by Stalin ...

One way or another, the plenipotentiary, with whom at the diplomatic reception on January 12, 1939, the Fuhrer defiantly talked for several minutes, asked

bluntly: - What do you really think about German-Russian relations? Perhaps, in order to ask this question at the right time, Merekalov was sent to Germany. In his telegram to

the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of April 18, he did not mention such a turn in the conversation, simply and sparingly conveying the following statements by Weizsäcker: “ **Recently, the Soviet press has been behaving much more correctly than the English. Germany has fundamental political differences with the USSR. Yet she wants to develop an economic relationship with him.**”

At the same time, it followed from Merekalov's encryption that the initiative for these statements

came from a German. However, he clearly asked his own question. And the point, it seems, was not only that dexterous (unlike Merekalov) and

the sophisticated "career" diplomat Weizsacker managed to impose on the Russian the role of the questioner.

Merekalov obviously had to ask! And, again, I owe it not to the Litvinovs! Why did he have to send to Moscow on April 18 a cipher about the meeting on April 17, if on the same April 18 he left for Moscow? And he sent her - for the report. To Moscow, he was

summoned, apparently, not by Litvinov, but by the one who to Berlin and sent - Stalin.

Weizsäcker later recorded that Merekalov stated the following: "Russian policy is straightforward. Ideological differences hardly affected Russian-Italian relations. And they should not become a stumbling block in relation to Germany. Soviet Russia did not take advantage of the tensions between it and the Western powers against Germany and does not intend to use them. From Russia's point of view, there are no reasons that can interfere with normal relations. And starting with a normal relationship, it can get better and better."

Some turns of this passage - even in Weizsacker's transmission - are very reminiscent of the style of Stalin's thoughts and speeches. And, presumably, this was not a coincidence. Could Merekalov, with all his diplomatic dilettantism, "thump" in the "Litvinian" times **without** a direct and far from Litvinian sanction? Hardly ... Or rather - no! Further, the secretary of state reported: "With

this remark,
to which

Merekalov summed up the conversation, he ended the meeting." Who "led the conversation" to the topic of our relationship?

Most likely, there was some kind of diplomatic "meeting battle". Taking into account Litvinov's fuss around the Anglo-French, Merekalov, as one might assume, was instructed to carry out soundings of the German side outside Litvinov's line. The Germans, on the other hand, had to conduct a sounding of the Russians, which was not an easy task, because Merekalov had almost no contact with them. And then - such a good occasion - the visit of the plenipotentiary

to the ausamt. And not at all unexpected.

Yes, Weizsacker had time to prepare for a conversation with a Russian. It happened, because before Weizsacker, Merekalov had already paid a visit to the head of the economic policy department of the ausamt Vilya - with a complaint about the disruption of orders for Skoda ... And Wil "kindly" recommended the plenipotentiary representative to make a presentation directly to the secretary of state. Now

Weizsäcker could "accidentally" mention loyalty Reich to the Soviet Union and the readiness of the Germans for a broad dialogue.

The Germans thought that they cleverly used the moment, but this moment was provided to them, it seems, by Stalin.

The INITIATIVE, however, was still mutual. While Weizsacker was preparing a plan for the upcoming conversation with Merekalov (the fact that it would begin with Skoda was obvious, and the "impromptu" about anti-aircraft guns and the German pact was most likely prepared in advance), Hermann Goering specially went to Rome for in order to enlist Mussolini's support in building relations with Russia.

On April 16, in the Venice Palace, in the presence of the Duce's son-in-law and his Foreign Minister, Count Galeazzo Ciano, "Nazi No. 2" told Mussolini that Germany was inclined to resolve the "Polish" question peacefully, but that Poland was making a turn in its foreign policy not in favor of Germany ...

"I think," Goering continued, "that it would be worth listening to Stalin's speech on March 10, where he said that the Russians would not allow the capitalists to use themselves as cannon fodder ...

- So what? the Duce asked. - This, of course, is cleverly said ... - So, I would like to suggest to the Fuhrer, through some intermediaries, carefully probe in Russia regarding a possible rapprochement, in order to scare Poland with Russia later ...

— Logically! We in Italy think so too. In the course of trade negotiations with the Russians, our Moscow embassy began to talk to them more friendly. And if the Axis powers decide to move closer to Russia, then we could start from a trade agreement with her. The Duce got carried away and did not stop: "The Axis powers could have explained to Stalin

that they had no intention of attacking Russia.

After all, in our ideological struggle

against plutocracy and capitalism, partly the same goals as the Russian regime. - Yes!

And if Russia declares its neutrality, then Poland.... - It's clear!

She won't lift a finger in the general conflict. However, the "democracies" will not give up the war, but it must be postponed for at least two or three years ... And you need to give up Ukraine, - said the

Duce. "We have no claims to Ukraine, and due to the lack of raw materials, the Fuhrer himself thinks the same way as you ... As for Russia, I'm sure that we will

agree with her ... Mussolini's consent was received, and Goering, who was probing the soil clearly on behalf of the Fuhrer, immediately reported it to Berlin. And now there was nothing to prevent Weizsäcker from appointing Merekalov the date of

the meeting—April 17... Mutual probing was a success here too. Now Merekalov could go to Moscow with information. The fact that the reception at the ausamt and the conference in Moscow coincided very well with each

other in time could also be a mere coincidence. But the very facts of mutual soundings were quite logical from the

point of view of the national interests of the two countries. The meeting at the Politburo was tense.... On April 21 Maisky arrived in Moscow. On the 24th, he was about to depart back, with a stop in Paris to inform the local plenipotentiary, Yakov Surits.

However, Ivan Mikhailovich left

only on the 29th... And a lot has happened in these days... In the Kremlin, Maisky reported in detail on the situation and moods in London, and, according to his own assessment, the picture turned out to be not very comforting. Nevertheless, he himself believed that it was necessary to negotiate

Reported at the meeting, of course, and Merekalov. And his information was more than suggestive - it pushed to quite definite conclusions. Especially considering that Hitler, in his speech on April 28, delivered in the Reichstag, did not allow a single anti-Soviet attack. That is, confidential information through the plenipotentiary and his deputy Astakhov (he was also present on April 17 at the conversation between Merekalov and the state secretary of the ausamt and led

records) was publicly confirmed by Germany now at the highest state level.

And from London, in addition to what Maisky had said, there was another information - about the rejection of our reasonable offers.

Molotov openly accused Litvinov of political bungling. What. It was high time! Stalin silently puffed on his pipe. But he

looked at "Papa" Max extremely

unfriendly. The formal outcome of the meeting was the decision to continue

dialogue with London and Paris.

But in fact, the main decision was the immediate resignation of Litvinov. Edouard

Herriot, a staunch supporter of Soviet-French friendship in the name of permanent Soviet-German discord, declared from the rostrum of parliament: "The last great friend of collective security has left" ...

Herriot did not specify, of course, at the same time that the last great friend of the collective security of the West left at the expense of the security of the

USSR. In Berlin, they did not hide their

joy. But Stalin, having removed Litvinov, did not return Merekalov to Berlin. On the first day of the German-Polish war - September 1, 1939, he was relieved of the post of plenipotentiary in Germany "in connection with the transfer to another job" ... He still had a long life ahead, but April of the 39th year turned out to be her "finest hour" ... Stalin acted impeccably.

Still not ready to get rid of Litvinov's burnt-out policy and Litvinov, and realizing that everything could be decided not in London, but in Berlin, he decides to have in Berlin as his plenipotentiary emissary such a figure who would have an appropriate decorum, that is, a high diplomatic status. But a figure worthy of his trust.

The career "Litvinovsky" "frame" did not fit here, and he chooses a reliable "frame" Anastas Mikoyan.

Merekalov is a stranger to Litvinov and not strong in diplomacy, but that doesn't matter. The important thing is that he belongs to Stalin and is quite suitable for probing, not as a master of probing, but as an accurate transmitter of Stalin's probing ideas and their executor.

The sounding has been carried out, the situation has taken shape, Litvinov can be dismissed. And he's retired. Fulfilled his mission and Merekalov. And he,

too, is led into the shadows. Now - at the final stage - we need a professional diplomat who knows the situation in Berlin well, who knows the language, knows the Germans and knows them. And there is such a one - this is the long-term charge d'affaires Astakhov ...

However, it is impossible to betray to the Germans his special interest in them, and therefore Astakhov performs his part of the work in the same not very high status of temporary attorney (only after the conclusion of the Pact to Germany he is appointed as

the plenipotentiary of Shkvartsev). Having rid Russia and Germany of Litvinov, carefully peering into the situation in Berlin, but not showing it, Stalin takes a break ...

However, the Germans were also not inclined to "start up" with half a turn ...

The PAUSE was short-lived. Already on May 5, Schnurre asked Astakhov to come to him and said that Germany agreed to comply with Soviet contracts with Skoda factories. Of course, this could have been a coincidence, but the solution of a minor issue "coincided" with such a major event as the departure of Litvinov and the arrival of Molotov. Moreover, Astakhov himself immediately emphasized not the material, but the principled side of the issue of Skoda.

And although the initiative of the meeting came from the Germans, the adviser of the Soviet embassy (and now the charge d'affaires) himself raised the issue of changing the head of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and asked if this would

lead to a change in the position of the Reich towards the USSR? The answer was quickly given by life itself, about which Astakhov

reported on May 12 to Molotov's (and before that, Litvinov's) first deputy Potemkin ... The first indicator, as always, was the press - its tone changed. As Astakhov wrote: ***"Rough swearing has disappeared, Soviet leaders are called by their real names and by their official positions without offensive epithets, the Soviet government is called the Soviet government, the Soviet Union - the Soviet Union, the Red Army - the Red Army, while earlier these same concepts were conveyed in other words that do not need to be reproduced."***

Rosenberg, in yet another purely ideological speech about the fight against Bolshevism, did not say a word. On the other hand, Braun von Stumm, the head of the press department of the ausamt, politely talked with Astakhov for almost an hour, proving that Germany did not have aggressive intentions in part of Russia.

In one of the Rhine newspapers, photographs of a number of Soviet new buildings.

On May 15, Astakhov came to Schnurre's outpost to "talk about the legal status of the Soviet trade mission in Prague." Moscow wanted to keep it as a branch of the Berlin trade mission, and Schnurre spoke in the sense that he personally saw no obstacles to satisfying the Soviet request. Further, if Schnurre's memorandum is to be believed,

Astakhov turned the conversation to the possible development of Soviet-German relations. If you believe Astakhov's notes about the same conversation, then Schnurre himself raised the topic of improving these relations. One way or another, they talked about it a lot, but the essence

converged in both entries - there are no special contradictions in the foreign policy of the two countries and the elimination of mutual distrust is quite

Maybe.

The Duce, who publicly stated that there were no obstacles to the normal development of political and economic relations between the Soviet Union and Italy, was also mentioned in the conversation as a good example. And on May 20, as we know, Molotov

talked with Schulenburg. On May 30, Ernst von Weizsacker, the state secretary of the ausamt, whom we knew, who actually became Ribbentrop's first deputy, invited Georgy Alexandrovich Astakhov, a Soviet charge d'affaires ad interim, to visit him. Half an hour remained until noon on the penultimate day of May

when Astakhov and Weizsäcker shook hands. — Mister Astakhov! You want to open a branch of the Berlin Trade Mission in

Prague. Does this mean that you want to develop economic relations with the protectorate? Please note that this is an important question, the Fuhrer himself spoke to Ribbentrop about it. "But what if General Barkhausen again...

- These are temporary difficulties ... I spoke to Mr. Merekalov about this and I repeat to you ... The incident

itself was really minor, and Weizsäcker immediately directly explained that all this was important not in itself, but as an occasion to talk about relations between Germany and Russia in general . And not only economic, but also political...

Are you familiar with the content of Mr. Molotov's conversation with Schulenburg? the Secretary of State asked.

"Only in part," Astakhov answered cautiously. — But are you ready to expand economic ties? - Yes, but Berlin itself refused to send Cord in the winter, and this looked like a political gesture...

"Everything changes, or rather, it can change," Weizsäcker defiantly put aside the pencil for notes and explained: "From now on, our conversation is moving to an unofficial track ...

And the conversation went on along these pleasant lines for another good half an hour, during which the German explained to the Russian that for Russia Germany had a lot of "goods" in the "shop" - from enmity to friendship ... And the tone of the

German during this hour in total (official plus informal) conversation was strikingly different from his tone adopted with the Frenchman Coulondre. The tone of Moscow in

contacts with representatives of Berlin was still rather cold. On June 2, the economic adviser of the German embassy, Hilger, came to Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan, People's Commissar for Foreign Trade. At that time, the German embassy included at least two natives of Moscow - the military attaché, Lieutenant General Kestring and Hilger, for whom Russian was a second native language ... Hilger clearly had the task of understanding what the Russians wanted and how far they

were ready to go towards the Reich. But he learned little in this sense, although he spoke for a long time and - as Babarin, Deputy Trade Representative of the USSR in Berlin, wrote in the official recording of the conversation - "deliberately confused" ... Still! After all, Anastas Mikoyan was not only a flexible party

member, but also an "oriental person". He listened to Hilger, said that the talk about German loans and other things had been going on for two years and accepted

the nature of the political game and that personally he, Mikoyan, lost the desire and desire to talk about this issue.

Under the "curtain" of Hilger's visit, Mikoyan told him that he used to stand on the point of expanding economic ties with Germany and he was well aware of the German industry, but orders, they say, could be successfully placed in other countries - in America and England ... - However,

I I will think over your thoughts, Mr. Counsellor, and I will give you an answer soon," Mikoyan ended the conversation. A

week and a half later, Strang arrived in Moscow from London.

Chapter

3 London-Berlin-Moscow-Tokyo (continued)

ENGLAND at the end of the thirties, even in its elite part, was far from homogeneous. Part of

City business community, clergy, politicians like Baldwin stood for the Reich.

Part of the elite was inclined towards the traditional for England policy of balance of power, and for this reason they treated the Reich

coldly. And the supranational (in fact, anti-national) part of the elite, where Masons, Jews, part of the church were strong, was simply hostile to him ... About this part, one should say a couple of separate words...

In 1937, Blanche Dugdale, niece of the famous Arthur James Balfour, who died in 1930, a conservative, lord, earl, employee of Salisbury, Disraeli and Lloyd George, published a number of papers of the late uncle. Having lived for eighty-two years, Balfour

had a more than rich biography and played paramount roles in English politics for almost half a century. However, in history he remained known, perhaps, primarily as the author of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 - a project to create a "Jewish national home" in Palestine. This declaration—actually a letter from the Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour, to another Lord, the banker Rothschild—was published on November 2, 1917, and was later included in the British Mandate for Palestine. For a man whom Disraeli took with him to Berlin back in 1878, such a move was entirely in his spirit. The niece took after her uncle and became the leader of the non-Jewish Zionists who advocated the creation of a Jewish national state in Palestine. These sufferers for the "chosen" people were called

gentile Zionists. In English, the word "gentile" has at least three meanings: biblical "non-Jew", Americanism "not Mormon" (very

revealing similarity!) and rarely used in the sense

"pagan"...

In Russian, this concept is equivalent to the now popular word "goy" ...
So, there were

enough such pro-Jewish "gentiles" non-Jews among the English "masters of life" - as well as directly Jews ... Among them ("goys"), Leopold I mentioned Emery is the closest long-term colleague of none other than Winston Churchill... There was also Churchill himself...

Being friendly with the "chosen people" at that time already automatically meant being friendly with the US elite. And friendship with this elite automatically turned an elite representative of any nation into a person who fundamentally neglects the true national interests of his homeland. After all, the Golden International has no fatherland!

However, not everyone in England thought like Sir Arthur, Sir Leopold and Sir Winston. There were also nationally minded lords, industrialists, politicians, bankers, bishops in England... Actually, King

Edward VIII himself was very loyal to the Reich. That is why (and not because he married twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson, nee Warfield) he had to abdicate in favor of his brother George VI. The end of the thirties became the moment of truth for many countries, and for the world

as a whole. Whether anyone understood this or not, the question was: what will humanity have in the future - a destructive supranational hegemony, covered with a fig leaf of a star-striped flag, or a creative world community of states that managed to avoid the main thing - world war. There were people in London who were well aware of this, albeit from a national capitalist standpoint. It was they who tried to ensure cooperation with the Reich, and not a war with it. The

most rational lever seemed to be economic... There were such people in Berlin too... On October 17 and 18, 1938, a German economic delegation headed by the head of the referenture for Great Britain of the economic policy department of the ausamt Rueter was in England.

On October 18, Sir Frederick Leith Ross (Lee Ross), the chief economic adviser of the British government since 1932, wished to meet with him. It must be said that this figure is sparingly covered in historiography - most likely precisely because of its constructiveness and largeness (with the outbreak of the war that he sought to avoid, Leith-Ross was appointed director general of the Ministry of Economic Warfare). So, Sir Frederick, Rueter

and the responsible official of the German Ministry of Economics von Süsskind-Schweidi settled down in the embassy chairs, and Leith-Ross began by lamenting the difficulties in drawing the Austrian loan bonds (the Reich refused to take on the external debts of the former Austrian government) ... Then we talked about this and that, but soon Leith-Ross got to

the point: - All of the above is of secondary importance to me.

There are much more important questions... In Munich, Herr Hitler had a conversation with the Prime Minister about German-British cooperation in the future, and Herr Chamberlain attached great importance to the declaration that they then signed with Herr Reich Chancellor. Ruther listened attentively, and the Englishman shrugged: "Alas, the Prime Minister is

disappointed that the German side has not yet appreciated the significance of this Munich Declaration ... In his speech in Saarbrücken, your Fuhrer did not even mention it ...

To be precise, on October 9 in Saarbrücken, the Fuhrer talked about England just a lot, but poured a tub of contempt on her, comparing the position of Britain with the position of a governess. He complained about the hostility of British public opinion and severely attacked the opposition of the "Churchillites" of Eden, Duff-Cooper and Churchill himself ... And here he was, of course, right, because the "goyim" - "Churchillites" were leading the way to a war that the States and Golden To the International, and not to the peace needed

by Europe... Remembering all this, Ruther listened to his interlocutor as attentively as before, and Leith-Ross, looking at him meaningfully, said as if by chance:

- Now Van Zeeland is in London by chance, and it would be interesting to know how people in Germany feel about his plan? "In

Germany, as in other countries, it was not considered a suitable basis for discussion ... Although everything is not so bad there," Rueter replied. Here it

is necessary to clarify something ... Van Zeeland was the Prime Minister of Belgium in 1935-1937, he had a reputation as a moderate, but he did not like Russia, just as they did not really like her in Belgium, which lost considerable investments in Russia after the revolution.

Having resigned, Van Zeeland (it is believed that at the request of the British government, and who knows there) prepared a report on possible economic cooperation between the United States, England, France, Germany and Italy ...

The absence of Russia and Japan from this list was quite telling, as was the presence of the United States. However, the Van Zeeland plan was outwardly attractive to the Germans by the fact that it provided for the possibility of providing them with loans, but ... But - through the Bank for International Settlements, that is, under the control of the United States.

Hitler was no longer comfortable with this ... And now let's return to the German embassy in London ... Leith-Ross did not insist on discussing the Van Zeeland plan. I think the negative answer of the German even suited him. And further he said this:

- Lord! Each of the European countries has similar difficulties, the solution of which is hardly possible on their own by a single state ...

Ruther inclined his head cautiously, waiting for what was to come. more ... -

At the same time, one can think about the development of political cooperation only if it is based on a common economic policy, - said Sir Frederick. Let me draw the reader's attention to an

interesting circumstance... If in Moscow the Germans were told that economic cooperation needed a political base, then in London they were told the opposite - the economy would help politics. The saddest thing is that both Moscow and London were right. Berlin really needed to settle political differences with

Russia and economic - with England, so that a lasting peace is established in Europe.

And then Leith-Ross finally spoke in plain text: "It is in the face of the ever-strengthening economy of the United States of America that the economy of Europe is in serious danger if the four powers, instead of cooperating, oppose each other ... Our representatives should meet as soon as possible for a completely relaxed conversations for these

Topics...

In these words of Leith-Ross, in fact, the program of European peace was contained - if instead of the fifth discarded participant, the "states", it would be decided to invite Russia to the company.

But if the Englishman's proposal were realized, four the great European powers simply could not ignore it!

So there was something to think about... Ruther, after listening to all

this, said: - The very fact that we are here proves the loyal position of Germany. As for your latest proposals, we will pass them on to Berlin and hope that we will soon be able to inform you, Sir Frederick, whether the German government is ready to initially enter into informal joint negotiations with the other three great European powers ... And the process began ... In November 1938 Vincke, a

representative of the

Reichsbank, was visiting London, and on November 6, the head of the economic department of the Foreign Office, Ashton-Guetkin, suggested that he consider the issue of large British loans to Germany. And in mid-December, the president of the Reichsbank, Hjalmar Schacht, paid a "private" visit to his friend, Montagu Norman, the manager of the Bank of England.

At the same time, negotiations began in London between the "Rhenish-Westphalian Coal Syndicate" and the "Coal Association of Great Britain" ... The division of spheres of influence was discussed, as always in such cases. The year 1939

has come ... In February,

London announced the forthcoming trip to Berlin in mid-March by the Minister of Trade of England Oliver Stanley and

Foreign Trade Secretary Robert Hudson. (However, it was assumed that Hudson would also visit Moscow, which he later did.) At that time, Herbert

von Dirksen was the German ambassador in London. On February 20, he sent a letter to the Aussamt, the first half of which is worth quoting almost in full: ***“The trip of the British Minister of Commerce Oliver Stanley to Berlin has a significance that goes beyond the discussion of current economic issues. It is being carried out at a time when England is facing difficult decisions in her trade policy as a whole...”***

In short, the question before the British Government is this: should British commercial policy be dragged along in tow by the United States, or should it try to maintain its independence through closer cooperation with Germany and, consequently, with Europe?

This alternative arose as a result of American pressure on England and the general instability of the world economy. Jewish financial magnates in the United States want to force England to go with America and keep England from cooperating with totalitarian states. The British government has

sought to maintain its economic independence to this day. This is evidenced by his vigorous measures to protect the British currency from American maneuvers and against the flight of capital to America.

However, the successful continuation of this resistance seems possible ***only if the economic instability and lack of confidence gravitating over Europe are replaced by a more favorable atmosphere and the creation of new production opportunities...”***

Dirksen (and he wrote the pure

truth!)? However, for the time being, everything went as the nationally minded part of the British elite wanted. The annual dinner of the Anglo-German

Chamber of Commerce was very, very warm. From the German side, it was attended by the head of the economic department of the Foreign Ministry, Dr. Weil. From the British side - Stanley and Hudson. .

And on March 15 and 16, 1939, a conference was held in Düsseldorf between the Federation of British Industry and the Union of German Industry (Imperial Industrial Group). And this was the peak of the achievements of the forces of peace in Europe. Alas, it was precisely the peak that Europe failed to hold on to ... On March 15, the parties

signed a Joint Statement of the "Federation of British Industry" and the "Imperial Industrial Group" ("Dusseldorf Agreement"). And it was not a manifesto of two economic associations of two countries, but a declaration of peace between these countries. The London magazine "The Economist" called the Düsseldorf

negotiations "unprecedented in history in terms of scope".

Indeed, for the first time since Kaisers Wilhelm I and Wilhelm II, Bismarck, Moltke Sr. and Moltke Jr., since the days of Disrael Beaconsfield, Salisbury, Rosebery, Asquith, Lloyd George and a string of other English prime ministers, the British Empire was embarking on the path not of containing Germany, but of long-term cooperation with her. For the USSR, this would mean peace for the coming years, if not forever. The end of

the planned re-equipment of the Red Army with one of the best weapons in the world fell on 1942. By the end of this year, the Red Army would have received several thousand T-34 and KB tanks, fighters, Katyushas, attack aircraft, and bombers. And after that, in a defensive war, we would be invincible! It is difficult to say whether the USSR peacefully solved the Polish problem, but it was quite possible. At the same time, the price of our loyalty to such aspirations of his could be

Germany's consent to the transfer of Western Ukraine and Belarus to us. Could the Golden International allow this? The answer is obvious. In addition, right on the day the Düsseldorf Agreement was signed, Hitler also gave a **reason** - the Wehrmacht entered Prague. And the whole "English" press immediately screamed about the "imperialism" of the

Germans. They say that the accession of seven million people of another nationality to the Reich is not an act of national unification, as before, but an imperialist

act. In the pages of the press of the largest

colonial imperialist power of the world, all this noise and din looked, to put it mildly, strange.

Yes, what the Germans did with the Czechs was not the most beautiful act, but the Czechs gave reasons for this. And, in any case, it was not for the British to be indignant here ... But

here ... The visit of Stanley and

Hudson was canceled. However, as Dirksen later wrote, Chamberlain in the House of Commons and Halifax in the House of Lords made statements condemning Hitler's actions, but did not demonstrate any fundamental change in their policy towards Germany.

"Soon, however," Dirksen sighed further, "the irresistible force of British public opinion dragged the government along with it..."

Well, the source of

"public opinion" in "democratic" countries is the press. And the press in England, as well as in the States, was primarily controlled either by the Jews themselves or by their well-wishers. So it was this press that quickly towed the British government into the fairway that led England in the direction of the United States ...

Hitler was already skeptical about the idea of an alliance with England, perhaps because he already had little doubt that the Anglo-French would not forgive him for the planned invasion of Poland. And Hitler had already psychologically almost decided on this, and if he had ensured the neutrality of (at least) Russia, then the hesitation would finally come to an end.

He could not leave the Czech "splinter" in the side of the Reich. So the Dusseldorf prospects were overturned by his actions, but they did not have the goal of breaking with England. Secret Anglo-German negotiations on the division of world markets went on from May to August! No,

the Düsseldorf was torpedoed by the Churchillites. Not without reason, their leader at one time was the first lord of the admiralty and, with his strange inaction, actually programmed the death of the Lusitania. And this death became one of the reasons for the entry into the First World War of its true creator - the United States of America ...

Economics and politics in the capitalist world are not only interconnected, but rather mutually entangled. But they are confused for the gaze of only an outsider, superficial, uninitiated ...

Here, let's say, the same Sudeten problem ... After all, it can be look at it from an unconventional point of view...

The transfer of the Sudetenland to nationalist Germany was insisted on by that part of the French financiers and industrialists who were connected with the bank of the Jew Lazar. A large shareholder of the German chemical trust "Aussiger Verein" was one of the main Czech capitulators, the Czech minister Beran, and this trust was associated with a chemical concern, one of the main shareholders of which was Chamberlain ... Such is the

world of Capital, which does not have a national fatherland and fundamentally takes a position cosmopolitan. And how was it in the world of workers and peasants?

On MAY 31, 1939, at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Molotov made a report "On the international situation and foreign policy of the

USSR" ... Already at the beginning of his speech, he informed the deputies that the latest changes in the international situation "from the point of view of the peace-loving powers have

significantly worsened" him. Italy was listed as an aggressive power because it annexed Albania, but above all Germany, which was credited with the Sudetenland, Memel and the fact that she "went further, simply liquidating one of the great Slavic states - Czechoslovakia." As deplorable facts, Molotov pointed to

Germany's refusal of the naval agreement with England and the withdrawal of the Germans from the non-aggression pact between Germany and Poland. The Italo-German "Steel

Pact" concluded a week ago
Molotov rated it as offensive and also aggressive.

Britain and France (and, incidentally, the United States) were listed by the speaker as "non-aggressive democratic powers," and much was said about the fact that the USSR is conducting and intends to negotiate with them with a view to organizing cooperation "in the matter of counteracting aggression."

However, it was also said:

"We stand for the cause of peace and for preventing the further development of aggression. But we must remember the position put forward by Comrade Stalin: "Be careful and not let our country be drawn into conflicts by provocateurs of war, who are accustomed to rake in the heat with the wrong hands." Only two

European countries are accustomed to entering paradise on someone else's hump - England for many centuries, and France - a little less. And the last time these "democratic" powers successfully raked in the heat was precisely with the hands of Russia - in the First World War ...

Therefore, the following passage was also present in Molotov's report: "While negotiating with England and France, we do not at all consider it necessary to abandon business ties with countries such as Germany and

Italy ... The trade agreement for 1939 with Italy had already been signed by the time of the speech ... The agreement with Germany was delayed, because, as we know, the same Molotov remarked to the Germans that first it was necessary to lay its political

foundation ... And then everything was still ahead, although the entire development of the situation from restrained coldness to the complete solution of all issues - both political and and economic - there were

only three months left. The LAST part of Molotov's report concerned our relations with Japan... At that time, the term of the Japanese-Soviet Fishing Convention of 1928, concluded for 8 years, had long since expired. After 1936, we short-term extended the convention year after year. However, the Japanese fishing areas were gradually reduced - after all, even in 1938 there were no less than 384 sites in our waters. And the

Japanese insisted on a new convention - even more profitable for them. And at the same time they referred to ... the Portsmouth Russo-Japanese Treaty

of 1905. Here, economics and politics were fatally linked, implicated in the legacy of the Russo-Japanese War at the beginning of the century. At that time, Russia and Japan—potentially friendly and complementary powers in the Far East—were pitted in the same way, with the same goals, and by the same forces that pitted and pitted Russia and Germany in Europe. Then the faithful servant of the enemies of Russia t

Witte, having led the ill-fated Chinese Eastern Railway through the territory of Northern Manchuria. Since then, it has

gone on like this - the tsars with "Witts" brewed porridge, and even the Stalinist Politburo could not disentangle it ... It was cooked very cool, and even very poisonously sprinkled by the Anglo-Saxons, as well as the Jewish bankers of America, headed by Jacob Schiff of the financial group Kuhn, Loeb & Co.

It was not worth it, however, to attribute everything only to kuns and lobs - in Japan there were enough of their own provocateurs. In 1931, the Japanese ambassador to Moscow Hirota (the future prime minister of the "Khalkhin-Gol" era) assured his general staff that "it is necessary to take a decisive position in relation to the Soviet Union, deciding to fight the USSR at any time when it turns out to be

necessary ..." At the same time, Hirota explained: "However, the goal should not be so much defense against communism as the occupation

of the Far East and Siberia." The military had the same view of things, and Minister of War Araki in 1933 at a meeting of prefectural governors said: "Japan must inevitably collide with the Soviet Union. Therefore, for Japan, it is necessary to provide for itself by capturing the territory of Primorye, Transbaikalia and Siberia.

In the USSR then, after one of Vladimir's long-distance flights Kokkinaki were popular poems:

If necessary, Kokkinaki Will
fly to Nagasaki And show
everyone the araki, Where
we spend the winter with crayfish.

But besides Araki and the Arakists, there have always been influential people in Japan who thought just the opposite. In the twenties, one of them was Count Shimpei Goto. Having died in 1929 at the age of seventy-two, he, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, organized the intervention in Russia in 1918, in the early 20s he was the mayor of Tokyo and the rector of Takushoku University, and in 1923, the Minister of the Interior.

Having contributed a lot to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR, since 1925 he was the president of the Soviet-Japanese Society for Cultural

Relations. In 1923, the Soviet emissary Abram Ioffe came to Tokyo - officially for treatment - and Goto gave him a letter to Chicherin, where there were many interesting thoughts, for example:

"Now the time has come when not only educated circles, but also the general population have fully realized ... that good relations between Japan and Russia ... serve ... as the basis of peace in East Asia ... Most of all, I wish that our friendly relations will serve as the basis for the well-being of everything humanity. It is the Japanese and Russians who must have full confidence that they can unite Eastern and Western culture and thereby eliminate the difficulty that has hitherto existed in the life of peoples."

Of course, this letter also contained a desire to negotiate at the expense of China, but there was that rational essence in it, having learned that Japan could get rid of a considerable number of painful problems in the future. Alas, the Goto line was not

realized ... By the beginning of the thirties, Japan was actively infiltrating China, and simply occupied Manchuria, later creating the puppet state of Manchukuo there ... In July 38, in the area of Lake Khasan, battles between Japanese and Soviet troops went on for almost two weeks because of two skyscrapers - Zaozernaya and Nameless, allegedly belonging to this "state" ...

The skyscrapers remained ours - although Marshal Blucher showed himself far from the best way, by that time he was more interested in alcoholic drinks than headquarters developments ... But skyscrapers

- it was so, a trifle. The main thing was in the fish... In the fishing concession... In the late

autumn of 1938, on November 28, the People's Commissar Litvinov received the Japanese ambassador to Togo, and a long and sharp conversation took place. Litvinov compensated for his mediocre, toothless - in relation to the "democratic powers" - European line of behavior

rigidity of the line with the Japanese.

"Mr. Ambassador," the People's Commissar was the very stiffness and formality, "I have the answer of my government and I will inform you. We will talk about the convention, but not only about it ... Every time you talk about a convention, you refer to the Treaty of Portsmouth. Well, let's take him and see what he's talking about... Litvinov put on his glasses and read:

"Article nine states that the government of the former tsarist empire undertakes—further directly in the text: "to enter into an agreement with Japan in the form of fishing along the shores of Russian possessions in the Seas of Japan, Okhotsk and Bering ... " Litvinov took off his glasses and asked: - Where does it

say something about the number
and conditions for leasing fishing areas? It is clear that both should be the subject of an amicable agreement through separate negotiations.

Togo was sullenly silent, for he had nothing to object to.

Therefore, Litvinov triumphantly continued his monologue, in which every thought slapped Japanese claims no worse than a clever housewife swatting annoying flies in an apartment with a fly swatter:

"The Japanese government in recent years has often mentioned the Treaty of Portsmouth, but it itself is constantly violating ... In Portsmouth you They pledged not to have troops in Manchuria, except for the protection of the railway, fifteen people per kilometer. And you occupied Manchuria and keep a huge army there. Togo was silent... -

Under Article Eleven, Japan undertook not to build any fortifications and military fortifications on Sakhalin and the islands adjacent to it. And now you have begun to obstruct the free navigation of Soviet ships in the La Perouse Strait, referring to the military zones there. But if there are no fortifications, then what kind of military zones can there be?

Litvinov paused, then added: "I'm not talking about

the violation of your obligations to pay
for the CER..." He was silent again, but the Japanese was also silent, and,

breaking this mutual silence, Litvinov announced irritably:

We cannot consider tolerable a situation in which the Japanese government, violating its own obligations towards the USSR, would insist on the fulfillment by the Soviet government of its obligations, and even more so on satisfaction of Japan's demands that go beyond these obligations. I am authorized to convey that the Soviet government does not find it possible to start negotiations on the conclusion of a new fishing convention for a long period before the Japanese government has fulfilled at least its obligation regarding payment on the CER ... We are ready to conclude only a temporary agreement as a proof of our good will for one year...

Togo finally unstuck his lips glued together by a long silence, and - perhaps because his tongue was inactive for a long time - his speech was very indistinct and sly: - I am glad

that there is an answer to our proposals. I really hoped that it would be short and clear. But it turned out that it is long and contains comments. I am disappointed with this answer and I think that my government will be disappointed too. You quoted the Treaty of Portsmouth. But it says that the Soviet government grants rights to Japanese subjects. This means that their fundamental rights are recognized. The convention says that it will be renewed when it expires.

Togo dazzled his lips, sighed and opened them again: "On the issue of violating the obligation not to keep troops in Manchukuo. Japan and the Soviet Union have pledged to have troops to guard the railroad in limited numbers, but since the Soviet Union has sold the road, there is no longer a facility to guard. Litvinov could answer Togo, firstly, that the

tsarist government and the Russian Empire, and not the Soviet government and the Soviet Union, assumed obligations under the Treaty of Portsmouth ... That the convention should not be extended, but could be extended *in* case *of* mutual consent ... What if there is no object, which must be protected, then there should be no troops in Manchuria - according to the letter of the Portsmouth Treaty. But the small-town wit Max was quick to speak only for

rebuking the Germans. And he just said that he no longer considers it necessary

dwell on the interpretation of the old treaties, and the term of the new ones has expired, and we must proceed from this ... As a result, after a

forty-minute conversation, the parties said goodbye, very dissatisfied with each other.

In Japan, they began to call for war with the USSR. On the street, employees of the Soviet embassy in Tokyo were immediately surrounded by a convoy of two or three policemen. They pushed them off the sidewalk, prevented them from crossing the street ... A car was driving behind them, scaring them with a collision and blowing a signal. And next to it, several Japanese in civilian clothes always walked - whistling, insulting and laughing ... Yes, the Japanese are polite people. But the Japanese, driven by

the order, are no longer guided by the norms of decent behavior, but by the order ... The negotiations that began in December of the 38th year were difficult, on February 14, 1939, the

lower house of the Japanese parliament actually gave the government carte blanche to use military force against the USSR.

In response, Moscow stated that the USSR would view attempts at "free fishing" in Soviet waters as an attack on the Soviet Union, with all the ensuing consequences. Mukden and Tsushima were suddenly forgotten for some reason. On April 2, 1939,

Tokyo signed a protocol extending the fishing convention for one year on Soviet terms.

The conflict was temporarily settled, but far from being eliminated ... And on the last day of the spring of 1939, on the eve of a hot summer in meteorological and - especially - politically, Vyacheslav Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, from the Kremlin podium

stated:

- It seems that it is time for anyone to understand that the Soviet government will not tolerate any provocations from the Japanese-Manchurian military units on its borders. Now we need to remind about this with regard to the borders of the Mongolian People's Republic ... We are serious about such things as a mutual assistance agreement ... I must warn that the border of the Mongolian People's Republic, by virtue of the mutual assistance agreement concluded between us, we will defend with the same decisiveness, as well as its own border ...

However, it was not only in Japan... IN THE THIRTIES, being in the Communist Party was the most dangerous business in two countries - in Japan and Germany.

In Japan, it was not only dangerous, but deadly. There, communists were often executed, while in Germany in the thirties they were still simply put in concentration camps.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the Anti-Comintern Pact was concluded on November 25, 1936 precisely between Japan and Germany, and only in 1937 the Duce joined it, and on February 24, 1939 - Admiral Horthy's Hungary and the Japanese puppet - Manchukuo with the "emperor" Pu Yi On March 27, 1939, on the eve of the entry of General

Franco's troops into Madrid, Spain also signed the pact (then it secretly joined the Berlin-Rome axis) ... The Anti-Comintern Pact was not directed against the country of real communism - the USSR, but against

communism within countries participants. And Hitler was ready (and he emphasized this readiness more than once) to distinguish between the ideological struggle within the Reich and being an interstate anti-communist, Hitler did not necessarily consider himself an anti-Soviet. We need to make this clear. It was in Japan... Among the elite relationships. That There is, different there were strong not only anti-communist sentiments, but also anti-Soviet sentiments. And not even anti-Soviet, but anti-Russian. Imperial

Japan could not forget the victorious Mukden and Tsushima for her, and this long memory of hers nourished contempt for the possibilities of Russia. It was that rare case, the disease - traditionally hat-throwing - was ill by many in a country hostile to Russia. However, Tokyo understood that an ally was needed against Russia. But who?

When

Russian

The United States was no good, because Japan was increasingly claiming that leading role in the Asia-Pacific region, which the United States—after the idiotically treacherous sale of Russian America by Alexander II in 1867—had long and habitually assigned to itself.

England? Elite England, in its traditional Russophobia, entered into an alliance with Japan for a long time, back in 1901, having concluded an essentially allied treaty with it. Its goal was clear to everyone - to encourage

course of Japanese extremists to war with Russia. It was at the English shipyards that the main part of the fleet was built, which sent the squadron of Admiral Rozhdestvensky to the bottom of the Tsushima Strait in the spring of 1905.

I'll tell you right away that at the end of July 1939, this story with the anti-Russian fuss of the "Englishwoman" was repeated. The same England, which was conducting political negotiations with the USSR and was preparing to send a delegation to Moscow headed by the aged Admiral Drax, concluded the Arita-Craigie agreement. I will say more about this later ... But this agreement

itself was the result of settling the conflict between Japan and England, which gradually arose in the part of China occupied by Japan, and indeed in the Pacific Ocean. That is, England was not

suitable for reliable allies (and could it England to be such in principle?).

France? France—and this became more and more obvious—could not really help even itself... Italy had no

serious independent significance without Germany... So, it was necessary to block with

Germany, and block against Russia. But Hitler did not really want this, although he assured the Japanese rather of the opposite. On April 26, 1939, Ribbentrop sent another, but

far from ordinary, ciphered telegram to the German ambassador to Japan, Eugen Ott.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs introduced the ambassador to a course of very delicate circumstances, saying that for a long time secret negotiations were underway between Berlin, Rome and Tokyo on the conclusion of a military union.

The first talk about this was started in the summer of 1938 by General Hiroshi Oshima, then still the military attache of Japan in Berlin ... And Oshima's proposals at first looked like purely defensive ones - they talked about support in case of a threat "from outside", with an "unprovoked attack from another power."

It was sometimes said of Oshima that he sometimes came across as a more convinced Nazi than the Nazis themselves, and this was not too far from the truth. Oshima was a natural "military bone" (father in

1916-1918 he served as Minister of War), a man of honor and principles. It's nice to be with people like that - so to speak.
- to be at enmity, but even more pleasant - to be friends.

In the same 38th, Oshima was promoted to lieutenant general and appointed ambassador to Berlin. And he even more actively began to promote the idea of a tripartite pact. However, difficulties arose here. Japanese the government wanted to bind an obligation to provide mutual support exclusively for the occasion of a war with Russia and orientated Oshima and the Shiratori ambassador to Rome accordingly.

“Both ambassadors informed me and Ciano (Minister foreign affairs of Italy. - S. K.) in a personal and strictly confidentially,” Ribbentrop wrote in cipher to Ott, ***“and, in turn, immediately informed Tokyo of their refusal to submit for consideration to Berlin and Rome is so essential project change italo-german (which existed since the time of Munich. - S.K.). They once again expressed their support for the adoption of the original draft and stated that, in if the Japanese cabinet decides otherwise, they will be forced to leave from your posts...”***

Tokyo, however, was not inclined to negotiate "in general", and in April 1939, a proposal came from there to Berlin, the essence of which ciphered as follows:

The Japanese asked for our categorical consent to so that after the signing and publication of the pact to make English, to the American and French ambassadors a statement about the following content: anti-pact arose into development Comintern agreement; while partners as their military adversary meant Russia; England, France and America should not see it as a threat against itself...”

Further, Ott explained in Japanese words:

“Japan is at the moment politically and especially economic considerations are not yet able to openly act as an opponent of the three democracies...”

However, Hitler, on the eve of a possible war with the West, by no means Not smiled to transform the anti-communist agreements into purely anti-Soviet ones - without being directed against

Anglo-French in the first place. Mussolini was not inclined to this option either. Oshima and Shiratori

understood this, and that is why they were in their positions are so categorical.

Reporting all the circumstances to Ott, Ribbentrop warned at the end of the encryption:

“This post is for your information only. Please keep it strictly confidential. Do not touch this topic in your conversations on your own initiative until further notice. And if in a conversation with you it will be affected by the other side, then in no case let the interlocutor understand that you are informed on this issue ... ” Ott followed this instruction, but the mind is good, and two is better. And the second mind of the ambassador was a brilliant analyst, who had already helped him out more

than once, helped to prepare reports to Berlin and enjoyed complete confidence in the ambassador. This confidant of his had good connections among the Japanese elite, which was quite understandable for the Tokyo correspondent of one of the most reputable German newspapers, the Frankfurter Rundschau... He fought in the First World War, had the Iron Cross and was, among other things, a charming, sociable guy... The name of the journalist was Richard Sorge...

With the 4th Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Red Army - intelligence - a member of the Communist Party Sorge has been associated since the beginning of the 20s. In the late 1920s,

he worked in China, where in 1930 in Shanghai an American Agnes Smedley introduced him to Hozumi Ozaki, then the Shanghai correspondent for Osaka Asahi.

In 1933 Sorge was sent to Tokyo, and in 1937 Ozaki became a member of the commission of political advisers of the Japanese

Prime Minister and at the same time - to the intelligence group of Sorge "Ramsay" ... Knowing this, Ott would hardly have been

frank with a likeable compatriot and would not have introduced him to all his correspondence with Berlin. However, Ott did not know all this, and soon "Ramsay" had already informed the

"Director" that Japan was ready at any moment to sign a pact directed against the USSR.

However, as already mentioned, Berlin was not ready for this ... And in the area of the border of Mongolia with Manchukuo, shots were heard more and more often ... But the number of those killed on both sides was still calculated in units ... In

EUROPE ...

However, behind all our stories, dear reader, we completely forgot about the director of many important events - about the goat-bearded Uncle Sam ... It would be

time to remember him. And just in connection with a certain fact, related to both Europe and America ...

On April 18, 1939, the US Ambassador to Belgium, Joseph Davis, signed an urgent cipher to be sent to Washington, DC, to Secretary of State Cordell Hull. On the same April 18 (efficiency that speaks for itself!) He received an answer.

I will cite both of these documents in full - they, if you read them correctly, show well who the States were for Europe in 1939 (and only in it!) ... I will cite them, and then I

will comment. Although one explanation

should be given immediately. Before Belgium, in 1936-1938, Davis was ambassador to the USSR. And one more thing ... After his recall in June 1938, the post of US ambassador to the USSR was free until August 1939. True, in March 1939, the appointment of forty-seven-year-old Lawrence Adolf Steingard as ambassador was announced, but he reached Moscow only on the eve of a new European war ... And this also says

something ... So,

Davis wrote: "For the president and secretary of state . ***I am convinced that Hitler's decision will mainly depend on whether Russia gives the full support of England and France. I know from my own experience that the Soviets had a distrust of England and France, both in regard to their aims and their actions. But they do trust you. They also trust me. Therefore, I feel obliged to propose - in case you consider it expedient - that I go to Moscow for a few days under the pretext of putting my personal affairs in order ... and see - if necessary, then unofficially - Litvinov, Kalinin, Molotov and necessarily also with Stalin with the fact***

to help the speedier conclusion of an agreement with England against aggression. Neither the French nor the British, in my opinion, will be able to personally contact high-ranking leaders during negotiations (and it turned out in fact - because Strang, who was sent to Moscow in June, was absolutely no match even for Litvinov. - S.K.). **I am confident that not only will I be able to meet the right people who cannot otherwise be contacted, but that they will trust my judgment and my sincerity. In my opinion, Hitler will not start a war now if he is forced to fight on two fronts. I believe that I could help, without assuming any obligation, tip the scales in the right direction in the decision of Russia or help to strengthen this decision and thus provide modest assistance in your huge efforts to preserve peace on earth. Perhaps, in the light of the broader information you have, such action is not necessary or appropriate. You know, I'm sure my only purpose is to help. You can't delay. Davis.**" Despite some naivety and indeed far from complete knowledge of Davis, there was a clear reason for his proposal - if Washington really made "tremendous efforts to preserve

peace

on earth." However, the answer was the following: **"Personally for the ambassador. The President and I sincerely appreciate your advice and your offer to be helpful in this situation. We both trust that you will understand,**

however, that from the point of view of internal considerations such a visit, however carefully prepared, may be misunderstood. In these days when Congress is considering our neutrality legislation, it's more important than ever to play it safe. Hull." The Neutrality Act of 1935 is an arms embargo against belligerents. In the spring of 1939, the State Department proposed to transform it so that in case of war it would be possible to sell arms to England and

France

on a "pay and carry" basis. Even these modest proposals were rejected by the congress.

Moreover, this objectively contributed to the war (which, it seems, the United States was counting on, because when the war began, according to the Lend-Lease law adopted in March 1941, weapons still flowed into Europe).

How Davis's trip could influence the decision of Congress, Cordell Hull himself could hardly explain. Sixty-

three-year-old Joseph Eduard Davis was a true believer in sincere cooperation with Soviet Russia. In 1937, he greatly contributed to the conclusion of a trade agreement between the USSR and the USA, was one of the organizers of the Soviet-American friendship society, soberly assessing the rigidity of the regime in the USSR as the inevitability of a natural "fight against numerous enemies" ... Davis was received by Stalin, and, having already returned to the USA, the former ambassador spoke of him like this: "A wise, simple man who knows how to look ahead, who knows how to combine dignity with friendliness." So Davis really believed in what he was offering.

And if what he proposed was sanctioned by Washington, then ...

Oh no! This could not have been sanctioned by Washington and Roosevelt, because the Golden Elite of the world already needed a new Great War... And two documents of the spring of 1939, taken together, clearly prove this.

However, dear reader, one more document can be cited from across the ocean ... On May 25, 1939, the American ambassador in Paris, Freemason Bullitt, in a letter to the leaders of the two leading French Masonic lodges - Grusier from the "Grand Orient of France" and Dumesnil de Gramont from the "Great Lodge of France, "- reported: "I have the honor to bring to your attention that ... I would like to invite one of your Grand Masters to my place one of these days to make a message that I just received from the President.

On behalf of both lodges, Brother Grusier went to Brother Bullitt, to whom Brother Bullitt handed Roosevelt's message. In it, the Brother President of the Arab Order suggested that the European brothers act in such a way that a conflict with Hitler "becomes inevitable."

"A compromise at the expense of Poland would be a very serious mistake," Roosevelt wrote. — ***Continuation of appeasement policy***

will lead to the refusal of the United States to provide moral, material and other assistance.

And then Roosevelt assured that ***"the United States will throw all its might on scales of the democracies fighting in Europe"***. And no "neutrality laws" bothered him. And what neutrality! Later, when the war was already a fact, the former US ambassador to London, Joseph Kennedy, played golf with James Vincent Forrestal. Joe, how do you think Chamberlain could have kept England from

entry into the war? Forrestal asked. Kennedy only grinned:

"Chamberlain's position was such that England had no nothing to dare to go to war with Hitler. "So what the hell is it then?" - And it was Bullitt who inspired the president that the Germans should be taught a lesson in the history of Poland.

Kennedy apparently did not know that it was, on the contrary, Roosevelt instructing Bullitt in a similar spirit. But this is what the British Prime Minister told him personally, he, of course, remembered what he told Forrestal about:

"Neither the French nor the British would have made Poland a cause for war if it had not been Washington's constant desire... Chamberlain told me that it was Washington and the Jewry of the world that forced England into the war... And the reader may believe that Kennedy's answers are faithfully reported."

- Forrestal himself wrote them down in his diary.

And we are all "punched" on the ears - collective security, say...

There is in our history such a major specialist in Germany - Lev Bezymensky. In the diplomatic - as he puts it - game of the Western powers in the summer of 1939, he already has six planes: 1) English, 2) Anglo-French in relation to the USSR, 3) Anglo-French in relation to Poland, 4) Anglo-German with the aim of possible collusion with Germany, 5) Anglo-German through unofficial channels in order to determine the true intentions of Germany and 6) German-English in the framework of unofficially informing England about Germany's intention to probe the USSR.

This Leo "forgot" to mention only one "plane" - the American-European! That is, about the plane tilted by the United States, along which they meanly and deftly pushed the European "democracies" to war against Hitler ... Or rather, against themselves, against the peaceful prospects of their own, that is, the American people. THIS is how, my dear reader, a new war in Europe was **finally** decided. Further,

we will return more than once to those days of 1939 and more than once we will see confirmation of what has just been said, but it is enough to know about this conversation to understand exactly what and why ... Yes, the war was decided this way ... And not Adolf Hitler made a decision about its beginning - he was by no means eager for a protracted conflict, although he was psychologically

ready.

But he was also ready for it because, as a talented politician, he understood: the war was decided without him. And the only thing left for him is to try to conduct it differently from the way the brothers Grusier, Bullitt, Roosevelt, Churchill and other cosmopolitan "citizens of the world" intended ... And this turned out to be possible only if the

tension in the "Russian" question was removed. And Germany needed Russia not only as a neutral element, but also as ... Yes, almost as an ally! In August 1939, the imperial service for the development of the economy prepared a memorandum

"The possibilities of the interregional military industry under German leadership" ... It concluded the following: "Absolute protection from the blockade of the interregional space can only be achieved **through close economic cohesion with Russia ... A complete guarantee is possible only with the raw materials resources of (friendly to us) Russia... Without an economic union with Russia... it is impossible to completely secure the defense industry from the consequences of the blockade.**"

Moscow told Berlin that an economic union needed a political base. But the West carried out its political "Drang nah Osten" to Russia in the summer of 1939. Strang left Moscow, and although his splintery "round table" was of little use, three

It was decided by the powers to hold military talks in Moscow now.

On August 2, the Politburo approved the composition of the Soviet delegation: People's Commissar of Defense Voroshilov, Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army Shaposhnikov, his deputy Smorodinov, Chief of the Red Army Air Force Loktionov and People's Commissar of the Navy Kuznetsov.

The day before, on August 1, France and England publicly announced the appointment of the composition of military missions at tripartite talks in Moscow on military issues. On the 25th of July,

Lord Halifax, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, announced the decision of the British Government confidentially to our plenipotentiary Maisky. On July 26, the French

Foreign Ministry informed Plenipotentiary Surits about the same decision. The

French delegated to Moscow a minor member of the Supreme Military Council, General of the Army Dumenk, General Valen, a teacher at the naval school, Captain 1st Rank Vuillaume, Captain Beaufrat, and some other minor things - one major and three captains, who were supposed to be reinforced by a troika of French military attachés in Moscow, led by General Palace.

The British, on

the other hand ... These sent an even more amazing company to us ... On August 5, the City of Exeter packet boat (speed - a maximum of 13 knots, that is, about 25 kilometers per hour) left for Leningrad with the commandant of Portsmouth, Admiral Reginald-Plunket Earnl-Earl - Drax and members of the English mission (one air marshal, one major general and also a few "small guys").

On August 12, the unfortunate negotiations began. Russia was ready to defend Poland and France with 150 divisions, 10,000 tanks, 5,000 combat aircraft and 5,000 heavy guns, England with one or two divisions.

At the same time, Drax reported to London that the proposals of the USSR were an empty idea. And after all, what is surprising and funny - he was right in this one hundred percent, as they say. However, Stalin, presumably, wanted to bring it to its logical end, that is, to failure through the

fault of the West. Obviously, this is the only reason why this idea has not yet been finally failed.

But it was about to fail ... Even before the start of the Moscow negotiations - on July 25, Schnurre, on the direct instructions of Hitler, invited Astakhov and deputy trade representative Babarin to dinner at the Evest restaurant.

On July 26, the head of the Eastern European referent office of the economic policy department of the German Foreign Ministry, who took with him a personal assistant, sat opposite two Russians, for the first time in many of their meetings, examining the interlocutors from an unusual angle - through the table not of the Foreign Ministry, but of a separate restaurant office. Actually,

what he was preparing to tell the Moscow representatives, he had already said more than once, but this time he spoke with Hitler's sanction, and this changed everything ... Therefore, when Schnurre

said that the leaders of German policy were full of the most serious intention to normalize and to improve German-Soviet relations, Astakhov immediately crept up and immediately remembered the words of Weizsacker - about a shop full of goods ...

Schnurre confirmed that Germany is ready to offer the USSR a choice of anything, from political rapprochement and friendship up to open enmity. Astakhov clarified whether this is

Schnurre's personal point or a reflection opinion of the German government?

Schnurre was not very intelligible in the answer ... And all this was necessary digest not only the two stomachs of Russian diplomats.

However, the process developed ... And on July 30, Secretary of State Weizsäcker wrote in his diary: ***"They want to make the decision on war and peace this summer dependent on whether the unfinished negotiations in Moscow will lead to Russia joining the coalition of Western powers. If this does not happen, then their depression will be so great that we will be able to afford anything in relation to Poland. I do not believe that the conversations in Moscow will end in nothing, but I also do not believe that we will be able to achieve something, as they are now trying, within the next 14 days."***

Weizsäcker had in mind the forthcoming Moscow talks between the USSR and Britain and France, and clearly overestimated the realism of the West and underestimated the realism of Stalin...

The PROCESS continued to develop ... On August 2, Reich Minister Ribbentrop, on his own initiative, received Astakhov,

which, given the difference in their statuses, meant the extreme urgency and importance of the demarche. The Reich Minister confirmed to Astakhov that everything he had heard from Schnurre was the official position

of the German leadership. So, the

"moment of truth" was approaching ... On the morning of August 15 - just on the day of the report at the trilateral negotiations of Marshal Shaposhnikov - Schulenburg received an urgent telegram from Berlin, instructing him to immediately visit Molotov and inform him that Ribbentrop was ready to arrive in Moscow on a short visit, in order "on behalf of the Fuhrer to state to Mr. Stalin the point of view

of the Fuhrer." At 20.00, Schulenburg was at Molotov's to report this, and also to acquaint the people's commissar and the Presovnarkom with Ribbentrop's note,

and in fact Hitler's ... - I was instructed to present this memorandum orally, but I would like to read it out, - said the German

ambassador. And he read it out... A document is always more convincing than its retelling. Moreover, such a document as the one with which we will g
fully.

After all, he's worth

it! After reading the note, the conversation began, and Molotov immediately

asked: - Count Ciano, in a conversation with our charge d'affaires in Rome, Gelfand, informed him on June 26 about a certain "Schulenburg plan" of three points, namely: German assistance in regulating relations between the USSR and Japan; conclusion of a non-aggression pact and joint guarantee of the Baltic countries; the conclusion of a broad economic agreement with the USSR.

The German was gradually filled with blood, and Molotov calmly asked:

"Mr. Schulenburg, how far is this message from Rome true?

Schulenburg was already as red as a lobster and stifledly explained that he was talking about the prospects only in general terms ... About Japan, he said, about guarantees for the Baltic states -

no ... However, Molotov

reassured him: - But there is nothing incredible in your plan .

- So, Mr. Molotov, the points you cited can be taken as a basis? Schulenburg rejoiced. "Now we can speak more specifically... However, it is not advisable to consider the question of Japan for the time being," Molotov explained. - Another thing is to "refresh", as you say, our long-standing joint agreements ... Schulenburg was with Molotov

for one hour and forty minutes, of which forty minutes were spent on dictation by the German ambassador. Schulenburg did not let go of his sheets with the text of Ribbentrop's telegram and did not want to hand them over to us ...

And from his words, the Soviet translator Pavlov wrote down the following: ***"1. The contradictions between the worldview of National Socialist Germany and the worldview of the USSR were in the past years the only reason why Germany and the USSR stood on opposite and hostile positions. From the development of recent times, apparently, it is clear that different worldviews do not exclude reasonable relations between these two states and the possibility of restoring in a good way, the period of foreign policy contradictions could be put to an end mutual cooperation. So forever and the road to a new future for both could be freed.***

countries.

2. There are no real contradictions in the interests of Germany and the Soviet Union. The living spaces of Germany and the USSR touch each other, but in terms of their natural needs they do not compete with each other. As a result, from the very beginning there is no reason for the aggressive tendencies of one state against another. Germany has no aggressive intentions against the USSR. The German Government is of the opinion that there is not a single question between the Baltic and Black Seas that cannot be resolved to the full satisfaction of both countries. These include the issues of the Baltic Sea, the Baltic states, Poland, the South-East, etc. In addition, the political cooperation of both countries can only be useful. The same applies to the German and Soviet national economies, which complement each other in every direction.

3. There can be no doubt that German-Russian relations have now reached their historical turning point. The political decisions to be taken in the near future in Berlin and Moscow will be of decisive importance for shaping relations between the German and Russian peoples for many generations to come. It will depend on them whether both peoples cross arms again and without sufficient grounds or whether they will again come to friendly relations. Both peoples in the past were always happy when they were friends, and bad when they were enemies.

4. It is true that Germany and the USSR, as a result of the ideological enmity that has existed between them in recent years, are currently mistrusting each other. There is still a lot of accumulated garbage to be eliminated. It is necessary, however, state that during this time the natural the sympathy of the German people for the Russian never disappeared. On this basis, the policy of both states can begin new creative work. 5. Based on their

experience, the German government and the government of the USSR must take into account the fact that the capitalist Western democracies are irreconcilable enemies of both National Socialist Germany and the Soviet Union. At the present time they are again trying, by concluding a military alliance, to drag the Soviet Union into a war with Germany. In 1914 this policy had bad consequences for Russia. The interests of both countries demand that the mutual tearing apart of Germany and the USSR for the sake of the Western democracies should be avoided forever. 6. The aggravation of German-Polish relations

caused by British policy, as well as the military hype raised by England and the attempts to conclude alliances connected with it, make it necessary that clarity be introduced into German-Soviet relations soon. Otherwise, things without German influence may take a turn that will cut off the opportunity for both governments to restore German-Soviet friendship and, if there is an appropriate situation, jointly clarify the territorial issues of Eastern Europe. In view of this, the leadership of both countries should not be given development

things drift, and take timely action. It would be fatal if, due to mutual ignorance of the views and intentions of the other country, the two peoples finally took different paths. According to the message made to us, the Soviet

governments also wish to clarify the German Soviet relations.

In view of the fact that past experience has shown that such a clarification can only be achieved slowly by using the usual diplomatic route, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop is prepared to come to Moscow for a short time in order to present the Fuehrer's point of view to Herr Stalin on behalf of the Führer. In the opinion of Herr Ribbentrop, a change can be achieved through such a direct exchange of views, which does not exclude the possibility of laying the foundation for the final putting in order of German-Soviet relations. You can read and read this text! After all, this is a clever and precise program for restoring that normal view of the fate of Russia and Germany, which was already lost in the time of Witte and thanks in many respects to the same Witte and other internal and external enemies of the two organically friendly powers.

MOLOTOV was, of course, an intelligent and intelligently efficient person, but, alas, he was not ***a clever one*** . In the Politburo at that time there was only one genuine clever man - Stalin. Therefore, Molotov did not immediately appreciate the depth of the German note, but this was not so important. What was important was that even before August 15, it was clear to Stalin that the Germans wanted to ***document*** the emerging de facto new relations with Russia as soon as possible .

And therefore, Stalin had long ago prepared that key word, which Molotov had to say before Schulenburg... He said it... And the word was "Pact"...

The Germans brought the situation to this. The Russians ***spoke*** .

And it was immediately heard and appreciated in Berlin ... A day later, on August 17, Schulenburg met with the Soviet People's Commissar again and joyfully announced that he had received a good answer from Berlin.

"It can be seen that they work quickly in Berlin," he noted with satisfaction.
ambassador.

"I also have an answer to your proposals," Molotov did not remain in debt. - And I must warn you that Comrade Stalin is aware of the matter
and the answer is agreed with him.

So, we think that the first step should be to conclude a credit and trade agreement. The second step can be either, as you put it, the renewal of the 1926 treaty, or the conclusion of a non-aggression pact plus a protocol on foreign policy... Sincerely committed to the idea of friendship with Russia, Schulenburg

flourished ... And Molotov added to his mood and added:

- Concerning the question of the arrival of Mr. Ribbentrop ... We appreciate the formulation of it by the German government. With its proposal to send a prominent political figure to Moscow, it emphasizes the seriousness of its intentions. This is not like the British, who sent a secondary official Strang to us ... However ... Here even the imperturbable Molotov made a slightly guilty pause and

continued:

"However, we need time to prepare, and we don't want to make a lot of noise right away... Is it possible not to make a lot of noise? But Hitler, who had to solve problems with Poland on dry days -

before the rainy season, did not have time. And that's why the question of the Pact became a matter of several days.

Hitler was ready to send Ribbentrop to Moscow directly on August 18 (and was even about to go there himself!), but even on August 19 Stalin still hesitated.

But Berlin pressed on, and on the morning of the 19th—it was a Saturday—Schulenburg was instructed to get "an immediate meeting with Herr Molotov."

At two o'clock in the afternoon he - for the umpteenth time these days - apologized before Molotov for perseverance. "But the urgency of the matter demands it," he explained. - Nothing, when the matter requires, should not be postponed, -
replied the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

And the Russian and the German again began to clarify the points and formulas of the future pact.

Schulenburg and Hilger, who translated him, left Molotov's office at three o'clock in the afternoon. And

half an hour later they were allowed into the German embassy from the NKID and asked Schulenburg to come to Molotov again at half past five ...

And at 16.30 the ambassador heard

from Molotov: - I informed the government and inform you that we believe that Mr. Ribbentrop could come to Moscow on the 26-27th after the publication of the trade agreement ... close ... And

on the same day, or rather, the night, two people tired of the last approvals - Dr. Schnurre and our trade representative Evgeny Babarin signed the previously initialed loan agreement. Its first paragraph read:

"The Government of

the Union of Soviet

Socialist Republics will make an order that the USSR trade mission in Germany or the USSR import organizations transfer additional orders to German firms in the amount of 200 million German marks." And here is the second point:

"The subject of additional orders are exclusively supplies for investment purposes, i.e. mainly:

arrangement of factories and

plants,

installations,

equipment, machinery and machine tools of all kinds,

apparatus

engineering, equipment for the oil industry,

equipment for the chemical industry,

products of the electrical industry, ships,

vehicles and vehicles, measuring

instruments, laboratory equipment.

This list is more than eloquent ... But

that was not all! The agreement was accompanied by lists "A" and "B" of "certain types of equipment to be supplied by German firms" for credit and proceeds from Soviet exports to the Reich.

From these extensive lists I will cite - and even then partially! -only article **some** "machines and machine tools of all kinds":

"Special vehicles for railways. Heavy rotary machines with a diameter of 2500 mm. Planing machines with a planing width of 2000 mm and above. Grinding machines weighing over 10 thousand kilograms. Lathes with a faceplate diameter from 1500 mm. Deep drilling machines with a drilling diameter over 100 mm. Gear cutting machines for gears with a diameter of over 1500 mm.

There were also ***"large hydraulic presses" on the list; cranes: bridge, forging, rotary, floating" and "rolling mills: wire, sheet and for thin sheet iron" ...***

There were ***"compressors: air, hydrogen, gas, etc." , "various special equipment for sulfuric acid, powder and other chemical factories", and "floating ship repair shops", and "turbines with generators from 2.5 to 12 thousand kilowatts", and "diesel engines with a capacity of 600 to 1200 horsepower "...*** There

And

were even ***"some weapons - in the amount of 28.1 mln germ.***

stamps." The agreement was also accompanied by a "B" list of "goods to be delivered from the USSR" in the amount of

180 million marks. We pledged to supply the Germans with 22 million fodder grains, 74 million timber, 15 million cotton and cotton waste, 13 million phosphates, 9 million furs and furs, 2 million platinum, almost 4 million manganese ore, and even one and a half million - "poplar and aspen wood for the production of matches." But in fact, there was a lot more on the list - up to raw and processed horsehair, fish bladder, down and feathers ...

IN SPRING Molotov spoke about the political basis for economic cooperation. But in reality, everything merged into one - the trade credit agreement slightly outstripped the political agreement. But only for four days. Litvinov's legacy

was finally over. And August 21 the Drax and Dumenk missions were asked to pack their bags.

A banker (and part-time politician) from the Churchill group, Leopold Emery, later wrote: ***"On August 22, Marshal Voroshilov told the missions of the Western powers that Russia was tired of watching the allies endlessly trample around and around, and therefore it enters into an agreement of a different kind. On the same day, the world learned that Germany and Russia had signed a non-aggression pact ... "***

Well, at least once Emery, describing the position of the USSR, rose - albeit misrepresenting a little date - to the truth. Well thank you and volume...

THE SAME On August 21, Hitler signed a personal urgent telegram to be sent to Stalin. Schulenburg handed it over to Molotov at 15.00 Moscow time and already at 17.00 received Stalin's answer from Molotov.

Hitler, in particular, wrote:

"To Mr. I. V. Stalin 1) I

sincerely welcome the conclusion of the German-Soviet

trade agreement, which is the first step towards changing

German-Soviet relations.

2) The conclusion of the non-aggression pact means for me the consolidation of German policy for a long time. Germany is thus returning to a political line that has been beneficial to both states for centuries. Therefore, the German Government is then determined to draw all conclusions from such a fundamental change. 3) I accept the draft non-aggression pact proposed

by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissar of the USSR, Mr. Molotov, but I consider it necessary to clarify the questions connected with it as soon as possible. 5) The tension between Germany

and Poland became intolerable. Polish behavior towards a great power is such that a crisis could erupt any day now. Germany, in any case, is determined from now on to defend her interests against these claims by all means. 6) I think that given the intention of both states to enter into new relations with each other, it is

expedient not to waste time. Therefore, I again suggest that you take

my Minister for Foreign Affairs on Tuesday 22 August, but no later than Wednesday 23 August. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has comprehensive and unlimited powers to draw up and sign both the non-aggression pact and the protocol (the protocol was briefly mentioned in paragraph 4 - S.K.). A longer stay of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Moscow than one day or maximum two days is not possible due to the international situation. I would be glad to receive a prompt reply from you. **Adolf Gitler**".

Stalin's response telegram was three times shorter:

"To the Reich Chancellor of Germany, Mr. A.

Hitler, I thank you

for your letter. I hope that the German-Soviet agreement on non-aggression will create a turn towards a serious improvement in political relations between our countries.

The peoples of our countries need peaceful relations among themselves. The consent of the German government to the conclusion of a non-aggression pact creates the basis for the liquidation of political tension and the establishment of peace and cooperation

between our countries. The Soviet government has instructed me to inform according to the arrival in Moscow of Mr. Ribbentrop on August

23. I. Stalin. This answer was restrained. But - unambiguous and specific. The next day, Izvestia reported: **"After the conclusion of the Soviet-German Trade and Credit Agreement, the question arose of improving political relations between Germany and the USSR. The exchange of views that took place on this issue ... established the desire of both sides to defuse tension, ... to eliminate the threat of war and conclude a non-aggression pact. In connection with this, the arrival of the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. von Ribbentrop, is expected in a few**

days for appropriate negotiations. On the morning of August 23, two four-engine Condors took off from Koenigsberg, and in the afternoon they landed at the Moscow Central Airfield. After a short visit to the embassy,

Ribbentrop went to the Kremlin for the first three-hour meeting with Stalin and Molotov.

And on the same August 23, the Pact was signed ... Europe, and not only Europe, was stunned. Yes, something to us! We got a real chance for a lasting peace with Germany and for ... WELL, BEFORE friendship with her, we were still far away ...

Chapter

4 Khalkhin Gol...

The SOVIET-GERMAN pact was concluded, and, as I said, not only Europe was stunned. Japan has also experienced a

real shock. Neither before August 39th, nor after it, in the history of Japan was there a case for the Japanese government to resign, the reason for which was the conclusion of a bilateral treaty by two other states.

Namely, this is what happened to the government of Baron Kiichiro Hiranuma. After receiving news from Moscow, it fell - on August 28. Former Prime Minister Hiranuma was an ardent admirer of Hitler, but it was precisely because of the Fuhrer that he "lost face." And two days before his resignation, the baron sent a note to Berlin, where it was bitterly (though unfounded) stated that the German treaty with the USSR contradicted the secret annex to the Anti-Comintern Pact. Publicly, Hiranuma was able to comment on the fact of the

conclusion of the pact in one word: "Incomprehensible" ... Of course! In the summer of 1939, he sent a plenipotentiary military mission

to Germany headed by the former minister of war in Hirota's cabinet, a member of the Supreme Military Council, Marshal Hisaichi Terauti ... The mission was formally sent to the next NSDAP congress in Nuremberg, but in fact had the task of negotiating Japan's accession to "Steel Pact" ... And now - on you! YES, IT WOULD SEEM, until recently this was unthinkable - for minds, however, arrogant, superficial and limited. So, back on June 7, the Polish

Ambassador to Tokyo, Tadeusz Romer, was received by the Japanese Foreign Minister Arita, they had an interesting conversation ... - Your Excellency, on April 24, I had the honor to inform you that my government's policy towards Japan, on the one hand, and The USSR, on the other hand, did not suffer

changes...

Translated from diplomatic into ordinary language, this meant that the Polish lords still hate the USSR no less than the Japanese samurai. Then the Pole continued

his flamboyantly pompous phrase: "Would you, Your Excellency, be inclined now, on the basis of reciprocity, to authorize me, in the light of the latest decisions of the Japanese government, to assure my government that Japan's friendly relations with Poland also remain unchanged?"

Arita hastened to give an affirmative answer and noted that in Japan "ardently desire the peaceful elimination of the difficulties that have arisen between Poland and Germany."

Romer immediately began to complain cautiously about the Germans, and Arita - even more carefully to "sympathize" with him. The Pole did not let up:

— I do not understand the German policy pursued under anti-Comintern slogans. The Western powers are now seeking friendship with the Soviets (ha! - S. K.), which until recently were in complete political isolation in the world, and Germany ... Here Remer even choked with indignation and barely

finished: - And Poland, without which Europe, some kind of anti-Soviet action, put Germany before the need to counteract unexpected German claims.

The claims were, as we know, both quite expected - since the time of Versailles, and very well-founded. Therefore, Arita, evasively and no less floridly than the Pole, answered in the sense that, they say, "the Japanese government, equally friendly to both Poland and Germany, cannot take any position on issues dividing the two countries, and compelled to confine ourselves to assisting, to the best of our ability, in eliminating these disagreements... "Alas," Arita said further, "we are most concerned about the Anglo-Soviet

negotiations. "We have given London," Roemer readily responded, "a lot of advice and warnings

about the Russians... We ourselves do not intend to participate in new agreements with the Soviets. We,

however, we cannot prevent our Western allies from doing this.

Particularly convincing is the English argument about the need to win over the Soviets, if only to prevent a German-Soviet rapprochement ... - I believe in it! Arita interrupted Roemer.

"Well, I don't attach exaggerated importance to this ..." the Pole waved his hand. "Although I can confidently report that we are aware of the interest in this issue of the leading figures of the Rome-Berlin axis ... Everything was said and listened to in an allegedly mutually

joking tone, but suddenly Arita declared resolutely: "British politics is a game with the Soviet danger!" And the

conclusion by any state of an alliance with the Soviets will be regarded by us as an act that violates the vital interests of Japan. Then we will have to develop a clear position regarding the new situation created by this act.

Is the way Japan will react to a likely act already predetermined? of such kind? the Pole asked, unable to hide his greedy interest.

"This issue still needs to be studied," the Japanese admitted, explaining: "Depending on the conditions on which an agreement between England and France would be concluded with the USSR ... As

you can see, in June 39, Japan was seriously afraid of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet agreement, but by no means - not Soviet-German ... It turned out, as

mathematicians say, "exactly the opposite." And the boss of Arita - Baron Kiichiro Hiranuma - could only say his historical: "Unfathomable"!

Lord Privy Seal Koichi Kido wrote in his diary:

"The treachery of Germany surprised and shocked Japan..."

Arita himself was both more emotional and more verbose... The next day after the conclusion of the pact in Moscow, he burst into the German embassy beside himself and, not hesitating in expressions, protested to Ambassador

Ott. - We interrupt all negotiations with Germany and Italy, - he yelled in Ott's face and left.

Hachiro Arita lived by that time for fifty-five years (out of eighty-one allotted to him), and he belonged to the career

civilian diplomats, starting to work in the Japanese Foreign Ministry in 1910. Soon he was

to conclude a significant agreement with the British ambassador to Tokyo, Robert Craigie. More will be said about him (about the agreement). And before the ink had dried, as they say, on

this Japanese-English paper, the government, in which Arita was a minister, collapsed ... The office of General Nobuyuki Abe replaced the Hiranuma cabinet. It, however, lasted only four

and a half months and also fell on January 4, 1940 - but already because of food difficulties in the country and the loss of support from army circles.

However, before that, the Prime Minister had to experience bitterness from the final defeat of the Japanese troops in Mongolia at the end of August 1939 ... HERE, of course, we mean

the events known to us as the conflict at Khalkhin Gol, and in Japan - Khan's incident".

Formally, this conflict arose because of the allegedly disputed border between the Mongolian People's Republic and Manchukuo in the region of the short Khalkhin Gol River. But the true nature of this conflict is already evidenced by the fact that over the Asian scorched steppes during this conflict, sometimes hundreds of aircraft fought from two sides. For example, in an air battle on June 22, 1939, 120 aircraft manufactured in the Japanese islands opposed 95 fighters manufactured in the USSR. These planes were called in our official reports - "Japanese-Manchurian" and "Soviet-Mongolian", although in both formulas

the second part was redundant ... It all started with small border skirmishes on May 11-12 in the Nomon-Kan-Burd-Obo area and in the Dongur-Obo region, and already on May 19, Molotov summoned the Japanese

ambassador Shigenori Togo and declared that there was a limit to all patience ...

"I ask you to tell the Japanese government that this will not happen again," Molotov reprimanded the ambassador, like a naughty boy. - It will be better in the interests of the Japanese government itself.

- I know about what is happening only from the newspapers, and it turns out that Outer Mongolia itself attacked ... I have no information from my government on this, except that Japan has no intentions to attack foreign states, but will repulse the aggression of other countries. You have this information from me! "Mr. Molotov," Togo asked

ingratiatingly, "does your pact with Outer

Mongolia provide for the Soviet government to speak on behalf of the Mongolian government on a question relating to diplomatic affairs?"

Molotov's answer was both brilliant and amusing, but most importantly, it was the answer of a truly great power: "Your newspaper

information is an obvious fabrication and is of a ridiculous nature!" There is an indisputable fact! Japanese-Manchurian units and aircraft violated the border of the MPR and opened hostilities ... We will not put up with this. You can't test the patience ...

- Molotov made an almost imperceptible pause - of the Mongolian government and think that this will go with impunity ... And my statement is in full accordance with the pact on mutual assistance concluded between the USSR and the MPR ...

Already preparing to take his leave at the end of the forty-minute conversation, Togo tried to talk about concessions ... Japan was now interested not only in fish, but also in the oil discovered in Northern Sakhalin (that is, in its Soviet part). - This question will be studied by the

People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and you will receive an answer, - Molotov muttered. Thus, Japan

would like to be firmly connected with the Soviet country by economic ties, but did not at all want to ensure their strength at the expense of a sincerely friendly policy towards her.

At the same time, the Land of the Rising Sun clearly overestimated its military capabilities and underestimated our ...

At the end of the thirties, the average Japanese tank "Shinhoto Chi Ha" had a combat weight of about 16 tons, frontal armor 25 millimeters (on the gun mask - 30), side armor - 22 millimeters with a 47 mm cannon and two 7.7 mm machine guns.

The speed on the highway is 40 km / h.

The heavy Japanese tank "2595" with a combat weight of 26 tons, which was almost never produced in Japan, had 30 mm frontal armor and 12 (!) side armor, with two guns (70 and 37 mm) and two 6.5 mm machine guns. Highway

speed - 22 km / h. Our "thirty-four" (medium tank) had a combat weight of 26.5 tons, frontal, side and stern armor of 45 millimeters (forehead of the tower - 52), a 76.2-mm cannon and two 7.62-mm machine guns.

And this is at a highway speed of 54 km / h.

And the heavy KV-1 with 75 mm frontal and side armor, a 76 mm cannon and four 7.62 mm machine guns and a highway speed of 34 km/h was out of competition even in the European theater of war!

"T-34" and "KV-1" were already "at the exit" in the series, but they did not reach Mongolia.

However, even our light tank "T-26" (he fought in Mongolia mainly) had a combat weight of 10.25 tons and a speed of 30 km / h, armor of 15 millimeters, a 45-mm cannon and two 7.62-mm machine gun.

That is, our light tank was approaching the average Japanese, and even the light Japanese "2595" ("Ha-Go") with its places of 6 mm bulletproof armor was not close to the Soviet "T-26".

The situation with aircraft in 1939 was not as unequal as with tanks, but also similar. Japan had 91 squadrons (about 1 thousand aircraft) in the aviation of the ground forces. We also had 3 air armies, 38 brigades and 115 regiments. In 1938 alone, the aviation industry gave the Red Army five and a half thousand aircraft. By the summer of 1939, single-seat Japanese fighters of

the 95 and 96 types reached speeds of 380 kilometers per hour. Our "Spaniard" "I-15" by the 39th year was considered obsolete at a speed of 368 kilometers per hour - far from the most successful biplanes "I-153" flew at speeds over 400 kilometers per hour. However, as the first Khalkhin-Gol battles showed, the

I-153s were effective only in cooperation with the newer I-16 fighters with their speed of 455 kilometers per hour or more.

Well, I-16 was also enough at Khalkhin

Gol ... And yet, Japan stubbornly did not want to see the obvious ... General Araki stated: "Japan does not want to allow the existence of such an ambiguous Mongolia, directly bordering on the spheres of influence of Japan - Manchuria and China . Mongolia should at any rate be a territory that belongs to us."

And it was not particularly hidden that Mongolia, which belongs to Japan - springboard for the invasion of the USSR.

On May 27, 1939, the day before the start of active and large-scale operations in the Khalkhin Gol region, the Italian naval attache in Japan, G. Giorgis, sent a report to the Minister of the Navy, Benito Mussolini.

No, the Minister of Marine of Italy was not the namesake and namesake of the Duce - the Duce simply held "part-time" this post, combining it with the post of Prime Minister.

So, this report stated: ***"If for Japan***

the government of Chiang Kai-shek is an open enemy, then enemy No. 1, an enemy with which there can never be a truce or compromise, is Russia for her ...

Japan knows that behind Chiang Kai-shek is a long red hand. The victory over Chiang Kai-shek would have been of no importance if Japan had not been able to block the path of Russia, to throw it back, to clear the Far East once and for all of the Bolshevik influence.

The communist ideology, of course, is outlawed in Japan ... Manchukuo was organized as a starting base for an attack on Russia. The recently adopted grandiose program for the expansion of armaments has the explicit goal, as far as the army is concerned, to bring it into such a state that it can wage war on two fronts, i.e., in China and against Russia.

As the next events have already shown, Georges was very mistaken in his assessments. And Japan soon had to conclude a truce with Russia, and even make such a compromise as its own 1941 Neutrality Pact with Russia. However, the Italian's

assessments accurately revealed the leading trend, and if they diverged from reality, it was primarily because

This trend is very much out of touch with reality. And

although few people in Japan recognized this, the line of enmity with the USSR contrary to the well-understood national interests of Japan.

FORMALLY, Manchukuo made claims to Mongolia on the delimitation of the border in the region of the Khalkhin Gol River, not recognizing the rights of the Mongols to the eastern bank of the river. It was behind this shore that the outpost of Nomon-Khan-Burd-Obo, which went down in history, was located ...

Since 1938, the Soviet 36th Rifle Division, consisting of three rifle and one artillery regiment, was transferred to the territory of the MPR from Chita. There was no forest for housing, and a military "dig town" appeared on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar. Winter came, followed by spring rains, and then spring heat. On May 28,

Japanese forces in the amount of 1,500 bayonets, 1,000 sabers, up to 75 light and heavy machine guns, 12 guns, 6-8 armored vehicles and 40 aircraft attacked the 15th Mongolian cavalry regiment and our few outposts on the eastern bank of the river, which soon became famous.

And three-month "Mongolian" battles unfolded, which began with a two-day battle with the advancing Japanese of the 149th motorized rifle regiment of Major Ivan Mikhailovich Remezov.

The regiment was transferred to the river by motor vehicles, and it immediately went

on the attack "from the wheels" ... Tactical success was achieved, but strategic ... Commanders like Remezov were such commanders that it was difficult to talk about strategic success ...

The highest command in the theater of operations was carried out in the form of "general intervention in the affairs of subordinates" by Army Commander Grigory Stern, who was more than far from the battlefield.

The commander of the 57th special corps stationed in Mongolia, Divisional Commander Feklenko, also did not rush to the forefront, settling in Tamtsak-Bulak 120 kilometers from the front. And on June 2, People's Commissar of Defense Voroshilov sent to Mongolia - to sort it out on the spot - the dynamic deputy commander of the troops of the Belarusian Military District, commander Georgy Zhukov. On June 5, Zhukov was in

Tamtsak-Bulak.

- Have you climbed far from the troops? he asked the commander of the special corps. Yes, we are far away. Feklenko agreed. "But the area of events is not operationally prepared.

- And what will we do?

- I'm thinking of sending for timber ... - Or maybe we'll go to the front line? Zhukov suggested to the division commander. - I'm sitting on the wire, at any moment Moscow can call ... Let the commissioner

go. And Zhukov set off on a journey in the company of the corps commissar, the regimental (and intelligent) commissar Nikishev. A day later they returned, and soon, on the orders of Voroshilov, Feklenko was replaced

by Zhukov. The fierceness of the fighting and their scale increased, the Japanese deployed the 6th army of General Ogisu Rippo in the battle zone. The calculation was to finish with the Russians (or, if you wish, with the "Mongols") by the fall, ensuring a decisive change by mid-July.

Bacteriologists from laboratories No. 11 and No. 731 of the chemical troops of the Kwantung Army contaminated the waters of Khalkhin Gol with typhoid, paratyphoid,

and dysentery bacilli. On July 3, the Japanese captured the dominant mountain of Bain-Tsagan. The

July battles were hard for us. On July 8, the commander of the 149th Infantry Regiment, Ivan Remezov, died. On July 12, the legendary commander of the 11th tank brigade, Mikhail Pavlovich Yakovlev, whose tank was hit, launched an attack on the infantrymen who lay down and also died in hand-to-hand combat. On his body, the orderlies counted seven wounds, two

On the whole, in July, neither we nor the Japanese had any grounds for rejoicing, although the situation of the latter was better - their preponderance was

somewhat evident. On July 15, the 1st Army Group was formed under the command of Commander Zhukov. The final was approaching, but it turned out to be by no means what General Ogisu Rippo had promised to foreign correspondents brought by the Japanese to the battle area.

RIPPO assured of an imminent victory for the Europeans. And Rippo himself was assured of the same by Genrikh Samoilovich Lyushkov, a curious figure in the Manchurian situation...

Born in 1900, a native of Odessa, the son of a tailor, in 1916 a clerk, he made a quick and brilliant career in Soviet times: in 1917 - a Red Guard in Odessa, in 1919 - head of the political department of the brigade, in 1924 - head of the Proskurovsky district department of the GPU, in 1930 - head of the Secret Political Department (SPO) of the GPU of Ukraine ... On August 18, 1931, he was transferred to Moscow to the central office of the OGPU-NKVD, where for a long time he was deputy head of the SPO of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD THE USSR.

In the first half of the thirties, on the protocols of interrogations Trotskyists often had his signature.

On July 31, 1937, Lyushkov was appointed head of the NKVD Directorate for the Far Eastern Territory, and in the same year he was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

A juicy, full-cheeked brunette with luxurious curled hair, with a foppish mustache, he had long been devoted to only one ideal - himself. Such people are easily "hooked" and become traitors even more easily.

Became them and Lyushkov. It looks like it was picked up by Russian white emigrant counterintelligence officers. In any case, already on May 1, 1938, agents of the former lieutenant colonel of the Russian army Vladimir "Osmin - Kolchak's lieutenant general, who had collaborated with the Japanese since 1932, on the advice of Lyushkov, organized the distribution of

anti-Stalinist leaflets.

And on June 13 (wow!) 1938, the former Odessa citizen left for Manchukuo ... And already on the eve of the events at Lake Khasan, he opened the state border protection system in this area for the Kwantung Army. He told everything he knew (and he knew everything from the situation

as of June 1938), and about the situation in Mongolia. But Lyushkov really wanted to please, and praising the Red Army in front of the Japanese generals, he would hardly have achieved this ... Therefore, he chided her in front of them, which did not add caution to the command of the 6th Army ...

They, as already mentioned, boasted of victories in advance and prepared the ground in advance for the relevant publications for

abroad.

They presented the results of the July battles as a "victory", and in the period from July 3 to 15, Rippo invited the first group of journalists to the combat area.

Among them was Branco de Vukelic, a correspondent for the French press agency Gavas in Tokyo. A smiling Frenchman of Serbian origin was willingly shown and told a lot, and he collected very complete data on Japanese airfields and their equipment, on the number and types of aircraft, and on depots of military equipment.

It is unlikely that all this was of interest to the Gavas agency, but in the Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Red Army, the work of Vukelich, an assistant to Ramsay-Sorge, was

highly appreciated. In August, with a second group of journalists and military attachés, Richard Sorge himself appeared in the Mongolian steppes. He had already visited these places as part of a German "exploratory" expedition in 1936, and even the Japanese generals, who completely trusted him, now listened to his opinion.

Sorge, in order to "justify" this trust, traveled as an old warrior to the front lines and studied the front line well. After all, then he had to not only give information to his newspaper, but also inform about the situation of the German ambassador Ott. The Japanese understood this and contributed to it in every possible way. Accordingly, Sorge's

"catch" for the Intelligence Agency was even more solid than that of Vukelich: the living conditions of generals and officers, the state of personnel, structure, combat readiness, deployment and plans for the redeployment of troops, planned operations and weak points, control centers and ... And the most significant - data on

planned readiness
6th field army to the offensive.

Sorge also learned about the removal from the front of the famous Suzuki division, as well as two Korean brigades. These were recalled by the Governor-General of Korea for the sole purpose of
saving them from destruction. Soon

Sorge returned to Tokyo ... Meanwhile, Zhukov, having set up his command post on Mount Khamar-Daba, was accumulating strength. And Sorge's data allowed him to make decisions with his eyes open.

Modern warfare has long ceased to be spectacular sword swings. Here is a list compiled by Zhukov himself of what had to be delivered to Khalkhin Gol from a distance of 650 kilometers by cars in the withering heat and lack of water:

18,000 tons of artillery ammunition, 6,500
tons of aviation ammunition, 15,000
tons of fuel and lubricants, food - 4000 tons,
fuel - 7500 tons, other cargo -
4000 tons. And it was

a list not only of what **had to**
be delivered, but also of what **was** delivered! Troops were also
secretly accumulating...

And meanwhile, new political
circumstances were gradually accumulating in the Pacific Ocean...
Japan was already in conflict with England, invading South China. As
early as October 22, 1938, she occupied the largest southern Chinese
port of Canton, next to the backbone of England in China - the port and
base of Hong Kong.

And on November 3, the Japanese announced the establishment
of a "new order in East Asia" ... And even before that, in July 1938,
negotiations began between the then Japanese Foreign Minister,
General Katsushige Ugaki, and the British ambassador to Tokyo, Kreigi ...

At the very first press conference after his appointment, Ugaki said:
"We had a special relationship of traditional friendship with the UK, and
I will do everything in my power to restore them and make them even
closer than before" ...

However, on September 29, 1938, Ugaki resigned, and negotiations
were broken off. Offices in

Japan have at times changed more than the gloves on the hands
of Tokyo diplomats. And on January 3, 1939, the new prime minister,
Prince Konoe, resigned. However, here one could talk more about
castling: the chairman of the Privy Council, Hiranuma, became prime
minister, and the ex-premier, Konoe, became the chairman of the privy
council. Most of the ministers of the Konoe cabinet also entered the
Hiranuma cabinet: General Sadao Araki, the mastermind behind the
putsch of 1936, as minister of education, General Seishiro Itagaki as
minister of war, and our friend Hasiro Arita retained

portfolio of the minister of foreign affairs. Konoe himself was also not left without a ministerial post, although he did not receive a portfolio, becoming a minister without a portfolio ...

Military operations in China were successfully expanding, and the Japanese were there respectively untied...

On February 21, 1939, they suffered hostilities so close to Hong Kong that sometimes bombs fell on its territory.

On May 3, the Japanese demanded from England and the United States the right to lead an international settlement (extraterritorial settlement) in Shanghai on Gulansu Island. On May 12, Japanese sailors landed on this island, but on May 17, American, British and French detachments landed there, reducing the situation to a draw.

The Japanese decided to take revenge on the blockade of the British and French concessions in Tientsin, starting it on June 14th. And before that, in Kalgan, the British military attaché, Colonel Spears, was arrested by the Japanese military gendarmerie on charges of espionage.

It all ended somewhat unexpectedly - on July 22 in Tokyo, Minister Arita and Ambassador Craigie concluded an agreement by exchange of notes, which received their names.

The essence of it was outlined by Chamberlain, reporting the news in the English Parliament on July 24: "His Majesty's Government recognizes the present situation in China, where hostilities are taking place on a large scale, and declares that, while this state of affairs exists, Japanese troops in China have special tasks. for the protection of their own security and the maintenance of public order in the localities under their control, that they are compelled to suppress or eliminate all acts and causes that aggravate their situation or help their enemies. It is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to promote any measure which interferes

with the accomplishment of the above tasks by the Japanese army, and takes this opportunity to make it clear to the English authorities and subjects in China that they must refrain from such action or measure." Actually, it was Japan's "carte blanche" for a free hand in China. And this angered many in the world. The US State Department

even announced on July 27 the denunciation of the US-Japanese

trade treaty of 1911. However, this practically did not affect American deliveries to Japan, including the military ones.

Chamberlain immediately declared that the agreement with Japan does not mean recognition of Japanese dominance in China de facto... And the British Prime Minister, in general, did not lie much here...

But what did all this mean then?

Well, let's not forget that this Anglo-Japanese "suffering" occurred during a pause in the active phase of the fighting at Khalkhin Gol.

And it was difficult to evaluate the Arita-Craigi agreement otherwise than as encouraging Japan to expand the conflict with the USSR. There was a clear analogy with the Anglo-Japanese military-political alliance of 1901.

Then, three years later, the Russian-Japanese war became the result of it. And it would be desirable for London, which was preparing to send Elder Drax to Moscow, to contribute now to the emergence of not a local conflict, but a full-fledged Soviet-Japanese war. There were those who wanted this in Japan too ... I must say that, in addition to Sorge, in

the group of guests of General Ogisu was thirty-year-old Ivar Lissner (actually, Robert Hirschfeld, the son of a Riga stockbroker) - a special correspondent for the leading Berlin newspapers Volkischer Beobachter and Angriff, a member of the NSDAP and the SS, the propaganda attache of the embassy in Tokyo and an employee of the "Eastern Department" of the Luft group, created by the Abwehr in Manchukuo. So, describing his impressions, Lissner-

Hirschfeld reported: ***"Strange things happened in Manchuria ... The young and ardent officers of the Kwantung Army were impatient after so many years of inactivity to earn themselves ... laurels on the battlefield ..."*** Dreamed of victorious laurels and the chief of staff of the

Kwantung Army
General Rensuke Isogai, who planned the first attack on Chita ...

However, things were coming to an end in Mongolia when the ashes of the anti-Soviet potential of the Arita-Craigi agreement mixed with the ashes of the anti-Soviet plans of the Hiranuma cabinet ... Decisive

superiority over the Japanese troops was achieved by 20 August. The number of troops on both sides was approximately the same (our superiority was about one and a half times, which is not much for an offensive), but the weapons ...

542 of our artillery against 337 Japanese ...
492 of our tanks and 346 armored vehicles against 120 of
their tanks. 581 "Soviet-Mongolian" aircraft against 450 "Japanese
Manchurian aircraft.

Our troops and machine guns had twice as many - the detail is also in
under those conditions, it was

important ... On August 17, the Japanese launched an offensive, but
without obvious success. Sorge accurately announced the timing of the
Japanese offensive, and it did not come as

a surprise to Zhukov. Yes, things did not unfold like this for the
Japanese. And above all, in the air ... In addition to the formidable, but
already familiar I-16s, Japanese pilots encountered something completely
new ... And in their reports they reported about amazing Russian fighters,
from the planes of which fire trails fell off in flight ... And in the vehicles
damaged by the fire of these miracle aircraft, Japanese mechanics found
fragments of shells with a caliber of about 76 millimeters on the ground
after landing.

There was reason to be afraid - it turned out that the Russians had a
whole powerful weapon installed on board the I-16. But it just couldn't be!
Yes,

and it wasn't ... The special five of Captain Zvonarev, attached to the
22nd Fighter Regiment of Major Kravchenko, flew the I-16, under the
planes of which the world's first 82-mm air-to-air missiles "RS-82" were
suspended ".

In a short time before September 16, when the hostilities ended, the
five shot down 10 fighters, 2 heavy bombers and 1 light bomber in 85
sorties, without losing a single one ... And on August 20, 1939 - three

days before the arrival of Joachim von Ribbentrop in peaceful summer
Moscow - the commander of the decorated 24th motorized rifle regiment
Ivan (son of Ivan) Fedyuninsky raced among the explosions of Japanese
shells in an armored car to the battle formations of his 2nd battalion, which
lingered on the approaches to the height of Remizov in the Khalkhin Gol
region. On this day, the Mongol-Soviet

troops launched a counteroffensive along the entire line east of
Khalkhin Gol. The pilots of Yakov Smushkevich dominated the air ...

The head of Ivan, Ivan's son, was already valued by the Japanese at 100,000 rubles in gold before, and now, when Fedyuninsky personally showed the battalion commander-2 how to "firmly lead the companies forward", the samurai could give more for him ...

The Soviet country was more modest in spending on Colonel Fedyuninsky, estimating him by the weight of the Gold Star medal established on

October 16, 1939. In total, for the battles at Khalkhin Gol, this freshly cast award (then called the medal "Hero of the Soviet Union")
Human.

And these fights were the first serious practical test
Red Army sample of the late thirties of the XX century.

By the end of August 23, the Soviet-German Pact was signed in Moscow, and at Khalkhin Gol, by the end of the same day, the encirclement of the Japanese group on a "patch" of 60 square kilometers was completed.

From August 24 to 26, the Japanese attempt to deblockade the encircled was liquidated due to the introduction of fresh reserves. Officers and soldiers wrote Tenno (as the Japanese themselves call the emperor) farewell poems and made themselves hara-kiri.

And on September 1, 1939, Pravda reported:

"On the night of August 28-29, the remnants of the Japanese-Manchu troops were liquidated on the territory of the MPR, and the Mongolian-Soviet troops firmly entrenched themselves on the line along the state border of the MPR" ...

Contrary to the May forecasts of the Italian attache Georgis, the Japanese had to sign the terms of an official truce in Moscow on September 16. And on September 19 - a protocol on the creation of a mixed commission to clarify the border.

The signing of the Soviet-German Pact and the end of the Soviet-Japanese conflict in Mongolia coincided not only in physical time. On the political timeline, these two events also fit very well together. The Germans were convinced that the Russians were by no means weak even in an offensive war, and the Japanese realized that they could not count on practical support from Hitler against the USSR.

Tokyo did not help the secret additional agreement to the Anti-Comintern Pact, in violation of which Baron Hiranuma reproached his idol - the Fuhrer before the resignation of his cabinet ... After all, Article II of this agreement obliged the high contracting parties "without mutual consent not to conclude any agreements with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics political treaties that would be contrary to the spirit of this

agreements."

However, the pact itself was called anti-Comintern because it was concluded to counter the Comintern, and not the USSR. As for the directly secret agreement, Article I in it also provided for the possibility (not the obligation) of joint measures only in the event of an "unprovoked attack" by the USSR on one of the parties. But no one attacked Japan! So, if you look at it, Berlin was reproached in Tokyo in vain ... In Tokyo,

Richard Sorge made a "post-game" analysis of the conflict for

Ambassador Ott, where he wrote: "The statements of Lyushkov ***and others who assured of the weakness of the Red Army turned out to be false. If the Japanese army was going to drive the Red Army out of its ... positions, it would need 400-500 tanks, which would exceed the capabilities of Japan's industrial potential. Germany should have analyzed the entire incident at Nomon Khan more carefully and abandoned the obsolete idea that the Red Army is incapable of putting up serious resistance.***

In Germany, such assessments have not yet been heeded. In Japan, the conclusions were correct, and in Tokyo they began to lean instead of the "northern", that is, the Soviet version, towards the "southern" - the Pacific.

But for the time being, we won't tell the story about this... RUSSIAN success

in Mongolia, far from Europe, immediately lowered the degree of political passions in continental Asia. And in Europe, the political "thermometer" has already gone off scale even in peaceful and guaranteed neutral Switzerland. The wife (and comrade)

of the Soviet intelligence officer Shandor Rado - Lena Janzen - came home upset in mid-August:

"You know, Alex," even at home she called her husband by his "Swiss" name, "something unimaginable is going on in the stores!" - That is? - Wild

queues,

crush ... - In Switzerland,

in Geneva?! - In Switzerland,

in Geneva ... - What's the

matter? - It

turns out that the Swiss government has announced that in the event of war, all shops and shops will be closed for two months! And so... -

Maybe it's a

rumor? - Alas, not a

rumor ... So I take a larger bag, and soon

don't wait for me...

Yes, panic food purchases have begun in Switzerland (!) Frightened by a possible (for the time being, only possible) war, constantly arguing about whether there would be one, people grabbed everything: cereals, matches, salt, canned food - whole bags ... They ordered shoes for children two or three sizes larger - for growth.

Those who were richer turned paper money into jewelry... Foreign tourists began to

leave Switzerland... Local Japanese-Soviet war in distant

dusty Asia 31

August is over. And

in Europe covered with forests, meadows and lawns, the war was "on nose"...

On September 1, it did start.

And on SEPTEMBER 4, Japan issued a statement in which it emphasized that it would not interfere in the current war in Europe and would direct its efforts solely to resolving the "Chinese incident" ...

The passage was, of course, from the series "And the grapes are green" ... Well, how, one wonders, could Japan intervene in a distant European war, in which only Germany, Poland, France and England were involved so far? Only England had overseas territories in the Far East, but with England, Japan recently

entered into an agreement. And not least because she did not have enough strength for the conflict with England.

But with such a statement, Japan made it clear that it was not inclined to get involved in a new conflict with the USSR. After all, Japanese military trucks were still rolling along the dusty steppes of Mongolia, carrying the remains of Japanese soldiers who fell in the "Nomonkhan

conflict". It was easier, taking advantage - as during the First World War - of the squabble between the whites, to freely solve their problems in yellow China ...

However, in the Far East, much depended on many things ...

As, indeed, in Europe ...

Chapter

5 Neapolitan Songs...

YES, IN EUROPE, too, a lot depended on a lot... And on many... In every social process there are basic quantities and quantities of the second order, smallness... But the factors of the second row are not only important, but sometimes come forward - to the first row... After all, social life develops from individual lives, and life is a multi-valued process...

By the beginning of the 20th century, Italy played a far from leading role in the affairs of Europe, although once on the Apennine Peninsula one of the most brilliant - if not the most brilliant - ancient civilization of the planet arose, developed and prospered. But if the Roman Empire in its era was a super-first-order value, then the Italian kingdom could not claim to be first-class in any way.

However, in pre-war Europe, its significance was important, especially since few people remembered King Victor Emmanuel III at that time. The Duce ("leader") Benito Mussolini became the symbol and synonym of Italy... In September 1939, the European war

was already gaining momentum, albeit slowly... leaflets. The French in the concrete forts of the Maginot Line held playing cards in their hands more often than staff cards. Still ahead were the May breakthroughs of the Wehrmacht, Dunkirk and many

what else....

There was still a declaration of war on England and France by Italy ... And here - while Rome

has not yet got involved in direct battles - we, dear reader, should go back a little ... And even - not
A little...

For most of 1939, Germany itself was still at peace with the Anglo-French ... And Russia in the summer of this year was still

London and Paris active dialogue in the spirit of the anti-German ideas of the former People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Litvinov, dismissed by Stalin in early May.

However, even Italy that year—despite the pact concluded with Germany on May 22 in Berlin—had not yet finally chosen the partner with whom it was possible to go far and successfully.

Two years before this "Steel" Italo-German pact, on January 2, 1937, an exchange of letters took place in Rome between the Italian Foreign Minister Ciano and the British Ambassador Eric Drummond (later Lord Perth). So the "first gentleman's agreement" between the Duce and London was concluded.

The future Lord Perth before Rome held the international post of General Secretary of the League of Nations, that is, he was a dim figure by definition, which could not be said about Mussolini's son-in-law, Count Galeazzo Ciano. On

April 24, 1930, the handsome Ciano married Edda Mussolini in the Roman church of San Giuseppe. The son of the hero of the First World War, Admiral Constanzo Ciano, president of the Chamber of Fasces and Corporations, Galeazzo graduated from the Faculty of Law, successfully engaged in journalism, successfully combining it with service in the Foreign Ministry, where he was admitted by competition. Like the Duce, he had a pilot's license and served in military aviation. The marriage turned out to be harmonious, and in 1937 the Cianos already had three charming children.

After marrying the Duce's daughter, Ciano's career moved at a rapid pace. First, he is appointed consul general in Shanghai, then - envoy to China. In 1933, he headed the press department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, then he became Minister for Press and Propaganda, and from June 9, 1936, Minister of Foreign Affairs. This appointment was, it must be said, quite successful in the sense that the young son-in-law, although he was full of ambitions and pretensions, then did not claim to be more than the role of a "workhorse" in his father-in-law's foreign policy. Knowledge of English, French, Spanish and Portuguese for the chief of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also not superfluous, although he was worse with German ..

Ciano also fits well into the public lifestyle that is typical for the Duce, fencing, arranging his

swims, personally picking up a pitchfork during the "battle for bread" of 1934 - a campaign for the self-sufficiency of Italy in grain, and so on ...

However, back to England ...

So, at the very beginning of 1937, Italy, already helping General Franco in Spain, and England, owning Gibraltar in Spain, "like a gentleman" guarantee each other the equality of the rights of the parties and the preservation of the status quo in the Mediterranean basin. Italy undertakes not to violate it, and this calms London a little, alarmed by the fact that Franco handed over bases in the Balearic Islands to Italy.

However,

already in February 1937, Mussolini unveiled a new naval program that clearly changed the status quo. London declares that the agreement is violated by this, and begins a new round of negotiations with Rome. In addition, the British are not inclined to recognize the annexation of Ethiopia by Italy ...

London was even more worried about the growing presence of Italy in Spain, where British capital had longstanding and considerable interests.

On April 16, 1938, the "Second Gentlemen's Agreement" was concluded in Rome, which came into force exactly seven months later. Italy

undertook to withdraw its "volunteers" from Spain "after the end of the civil war", to reduce the garrisons in Libya to the size of peacetime, to stop anti-British propaganda among the Arabs, to guarantee England its interests in the area of the Ethiopian Lake Tan and agreed to join the treaty adopted on the London Sea conferences of 1935-1936.

England, for its part, recognized the capture of Ethiopia, agreed to equal rights with Italy's own in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and confirmed the freedom of passage of Italian ships through the Suez Canal. Regarding the unsuccessful

London conference, I will inform you that Italy was at it, but did not sign anything (Japan left the conference altogether). The London Treaty, however, did not introduce quantitative restrictions on navies, but restrictions on the tonnage and caliber of guns (the displacement of battleships and their main

the caliber should not exceed 35 thousand tons and 14 inches, that is, 355.6 mm; aircraft carriers - 23 thousand and 6.1 inches, and so on).

Now, outwardly quite loyal relations have been established between Rome and London, also due to the fact that on March 12 the Germans entered Austria, having carried out the Anschluss ... This did not bring joy to either London or, especially, Rome.

At the end of September 1938, Benito Mussolini acted as an intermediary in resolving the Sudeten crisis, and his role in holding the Munich Conference of the Duce's actions did not lessen the same Chamberlain. This is how the "English" line of the pre-war Italian

politicians.

As for the "French" line, it was much less pronounced in the second half of the thirties. And although England sometimes looks jealously at some rapprochement between Italy and France, considering influence on France its undivided prerogative, there is no special Italian-French friendship, because for the Duce, relations with London, as with the senior partner of Paris, are more important.

However, at the beginning of 1935, the French Prime Minister Pierre Laval, having arrived in Rome, gives the Duce a desert zone in the south of Tunisia in exchange for agreeing to deprive the Italians living in Tunisia since 1945 of their privileged rights stipulated by the 1896 treaty. These

curtsies, of course, did not have any special significance ...

The "German" line of the Duce's policy was ANOTHER matter ... But she too It was very, very difficult...

Italy has been considered a "totalitarian" country for a long time - due to the authoritarian nature of the fascist regime. However, the Duce came to power under purely social slogans. Germany

lost "democracy" later, and the very ideological basis on which Nazism gained power assumed an active and tough foreign policy, because Hitler solemnly promised the Germans to end the dictates of the Treaty of Versailles.

Mussolini's ideas of Greater Germany, of course, were already disturbed by virtue of Italian interests in Austria. Therefore, almost immediately after Hitler came to power, he proposed to conclude a pact "on consent and cooperation" between Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany ...

When the Duce's project was published, the press raised a big noise, and what was it from ...

There were and are different opinions and assurances about the Pact of Four. Here the Americans assured that the idea of the pact belongs to the British Prime Minister MacDonald, who simply planted it on the Duce during a visit to Rome. And McDonald, they say, agreed on this idea with the US State Department. And the United States approved it, because its implementation ensured the creation of a reactionary Germany in the form of a "sword" sent to the USSR.

So, according to the Yankees, the "Pact of Four" was anti-Soviet. Such an assessment from the lips of natural anti-communists and anti-Sovietists looks suspicious in itself. Having doubted it, we are unlikely to be mistaken, because, according to Mussolini's plan, the pact was anti-Versailles. And

since a lot of things were heaped up around this moment in real time, I will tell you more about the Pact of Four. Knowledge and understanding of the essence of the matter will help us later - when we discover completely unexpected features in Mussolini's policy ... So ... For the first time, Mussolini put the ideas

of the pact on paper in early March 1933, while staying at the country residence of Rocca della Caminata ... And I will immediately note that, firstly, his meeting with MacDonald took place later, and secondly, the Duce immediately pointed out that he claimed only the first draft and that, in addition to Mussolini, the pact had three more fathers ... Later we will see ... The essence of the project with amendments of other "fathers" was as follows ...

I *The four Western powers - Italy, France, Germany and Great Britain - undertake in mutual relations with each other to implement a policy of effective cooperation in order to maintain peace in the spirit of the Kellogg Pact* (declarative pact on the renunciation of war as a means of national policy. - S. K.) ... ***In the field of European relations, they undertake to act in such a way that this policy of peace, if necessary, is also adopted by other states.***

The Four Powers reaffirm, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the League of Nations, the principle of revising peace treaties in the presence of conditions which may lead to conflict between states. They declare, however, that this principle can only be applied within the framework of the League of Nations and in a spirit of concord and solidarity with respect to mutual interests.

III

Italy, France and Great Britain declare that in the event that the Conference on Disarmament leads to only partial results, the equality of rights recognized for Germany must be effectively applied ...

IV

The Four Powers undertake to pursue, to the extent possible, an agreed course in all political and non-political, European and non-European questions, as well as in the field of colonial problems ...

What did all this mean when concrete state values were substituted into the general formulas of the pact?

Knowing the situation, one could assume that. By acting together and in harmony, the four powers could solve the two most painful problems created by the Versailles system without war. The two problems are: 1) Danzig and Corridor; 2) The Sudetenland...

Everything was not stupidly

conceived. The Anglo-French, recognizing Germany's right to resolve two problems in her favor, avoided the strain of a European war.

The benefits for Germany were obvious. No wonder von Papen immediately declared that Mussolini's idea

was "brilliant." As for Italy ... Well, if after some time, with the "submission" of Italy, Poland was forced to return everything superfluous to the Germans, and Czechoslovakia - the Sudetenland that did not rightfully belong to it, then in this way the Duce could ensure the Fuhrer's loyalty to pro-Italian Austria. After all, such Austria was a natural "buffer" between the Reich

and Italy. Speaking on March 15 with the German ambassador in Rome, Ulrich Hassel (by the way - an opponent of the idea of \u200b\u200bthe "axis"), the Duce said:

"The pact will provide you with five to ten years of armament on the basis of the principle of equality, and France has nothing to object to. At the same time, the possibility of revising peace treaties will be officially recognized, which will practically eliminate it ...

It is not surprising, therefore, that even the talk of a "Pact of Four" caused alarm among those European countries whose political face was covered in thick Versailles fluff. That is, the countries of the Little Entente: Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia, and especially Poland. After all, the last Versailles rolled off the former German lands, especially a lot of.

But also Czechoslovakia, "sewn together" in Paris from several national "rags", received a fat bite in Versailles in the form of the former Austrian, ethnically German Sudetenland. And the idea of

"revising peace treaties under conditions that could lead to conflict between states" almost directly pointed to a potential European conflict over the Sudetenland and the Polish "Corridor" ...

Yes, and created not only by the will of the South Slavs, but also by the will of Freemasonry, Yugoslavia looked at the "Pact of Four" through the prism of possible claims against it by Rome (and Berlin) ... They had reason to

worry! The PACT of Four was signed on July 15, 1933 in Mussolini's office by the Duce himself and the ambassadors of England, France and Germany.

From the moment the draft pact was published, the Soviet press presented it as "anti-Soviet", ignoring the Soviet Union and aimed at isolating it. At that time, this "mouthpiece of public opinion" was, in its political and national composition, to a large extent both Trotskyist and anti-German. Izvestia was especially frolicking... The hidden Trotskyists did not need the pact because it was

putting out the "global fire" they loved. The reactionary "parochial" people from the environment of the

"chosen people" also did not need him because he ensured stability in Europe and could help improve relations between the USSR and Germany.

But an amusing (only funny?) coincidence of points of view: The Pact of Four was presented as anti-Soviet not only by Izvestia, but also by many bourgeois European newspapers of a far from progressive persuasion ... Why? Well, with regard to Europe,

everything

could be explained in the same way as it was explained on July 5, 1933, to the member of the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs Stomonyakov by the French Ambassador in Moscow, Charles-Herve Alphand. And this explanation is worth quoting *verbatim...*

It was about Litvin's favorite brainchild - collective security, about two empty conventions just concluded by the USSR in London on July 3 and 4 on the definition of an aggressor with Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia ...

This list lacked, perhaps, only Luxembourg, Monaco and Liechtenstein, but Alfand came to congratulate the Russians on their "success", but reasonably remarked:

- And in essence, what do the conventions you concluded materially give? Who will be the judge in case of violation of these conventions by any of the participants? — Public

opinion of the whole world! Stomonyakov gave a surprisingly naive answer. And even the scorched diplomatic fox Alfand

could not stand it: - Public opinion! What it is! The press does it. And we know the press. With you, it expresses at least the views of the government. And whose views does it reflect here in France? The views of those who pay. I will tell you one case, which I ask you not to refer to ... Once I negotiated with Romania (**Alfand was the ambassador there.** - S.K.). In the interests of France, I wanted to issue a communiqué to our press. However, it only appeared in two newspapers. The big press didn't want to publish it. It turned out that it had already been paid for by the Romanians. Note that the communiqué was sent by the ministry. That's what public opinion is! Examples of Alfand's assessment could be found directly on the subject of the pact. In November 1933, Benes, then the Minister of Foreign Affairs

of Czechoslovakia, gave an interview to the editor-in-chief of the French newspaper Zhur Thomas ...

This is what the pact was in Beneš's description... ***“When Mr. Mussolini undertook a diplomatic action connected with the Pact of Four, he had in mind a certain idea, plan, project.***

Peace, in his view, should be secured by dividing the entire globe. This division of the world provided that Europe and its colonies form four zones of influence.

England possessed an empire, the size of which is enormous; France retained its colonial possessions and mandates; Germany and Italy divided Eastern Europe into two large zones of influence;

Germany established its dominance in Belgium and Russia. Italy received a sphere including the Danubian countries and the Balkans. Italy and

Germany believed that with this large partition, they would easily come to an agreement with Poland: she would give up the “Corridor” in exchange for a part of Ukraine ... You probably remember Mr. Gutenberg’s statement in London in connection with this ”...

Thomas did not publish this interview for five years, making it public in 1939. And it can be understood - there was a lot of nonsense piled up here. If the four powers

could agree on such serious concrete things as the division of spheres of influence, then they would not need to conclude a pact of the content with which we are already familiar.

The partition plan itself, outlined by Benes, was surprisingly naive and geographically ignorant, because entire continents turned out to be outside the idea of “dividing the entire globe” - the two Americas and Africa, China, the Pacific region and much more ...

The reference to the statement of the German Minister of Economics Hugenberg was also not worth a penny - we will see it now ... And all these stories were, of course, a provocation by Beneš, for which good relations between the USSR and Germany meant collapse.

And with the Sudetenland, in the implementation and strengthening of the Pact of Four regime, Benes would most likely have to part without any Munich ...

So it was with the bourgeois press...

And how was it with the Soviet press?

Alfan believed that even in the USSR she expressed the views of the government, that is, Stalin and the Politburo ... But, alas, he was mistaken - then it was still far from that. Here's

an example for you...

In a conversation with Alfan, Stomonyakov mentioned the "Hugenberg Memorandum" presented at the International Economic Conference in London and said:

The Germans are complaining that our press is inciting the Soviet public against Germany. However, a hundred years of so-called Bolshevik propaganda could not have achieved the same effect as one Hugenberg memorandum, after which the workers and peasants consider Hitlerism their worst enemy ... - Oh, that's very true, and what

is happening in Germany is a real psychosis, - the bourgeois diplomat Alfan immediately assented to Stomonyakov ... And how could he not encourage the anti-

Germanism of the big Litvinov "cadre"! But what was it about ... The German delegation at the

International Economic

Conference in London handed over to the chairman of its Economic Commission a memorandum from Minister of Economics Hugenberg. And the Litvinov People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs - on

the instructions, of course, of Litvinov himself - pulled out **one phrase** from this document, declared that it directly concerned the USSR, and immediately slammed a note on the table on June 22, 1933 to the Secretary of State of the ausamt Bulov ...

Here is the phrase quoted in the note:

"The second measure is to place at the disposal of the "people without space" new territories where this energetic race could establish colonies and carry out great peaceful works ... We suffer not from overproduction, but from forced underconsumption (any sensible Marxist should have applauded this statement! -SK) ... War, revolution and internal devastation found their starting point in Russia, in the great regions of the East ... This destructive process is still ongoing. Now it's time to stop him."

As you can see, nothing was said about the USSR. And in general, something completely different was meant here ... However, the Litvinists brazenly

declared:

“This paragraph contains a direct call on the part of the German delegation to representatives of other powers by joint efforts to put an end to the “revolution and internal devastation that found their starting point in Russia,” i.e., a call to war against the USSR.

In addition, from the entire context of this paragraph follows Germany's demand that the territory of the Soviet Union be granted to it for colonization.

Further, the authors of this vile and, at the same time, stupid opus-lapsus, immediately published in Izvestia, expressed “strong protest”, etc. Plenipotentiary Khinchuk attributed this note to the ausamt ... Bülow languidly

listened to all this nonsense and languidly said:

- I'm going on vacation tomorrow, but I warn you in advance: the answer is will be given in an acute form. It's

not about the form, it's about the content! “But it is precisely the content of the memorandum transmitted by Gutenberg that does not give any grounds for your suspicions!” Bulow objected. “It is only because of your excessive sensitivity that you saw here those thoughts that would give you a reason to protest. The part that concerns the USSR has nothing to do with the first part about colonization in Africa. It was not about the war against the USSR and not about the settlement in the USSR. This meant settlements in Canada, Chile and other South American countries, where Germany encounters difficulties in the implementation of settlements. With regard to Russia and the countries of the East, mainly China, it was only about the reduced purchasing power in these countries ... - This phrase was understood not only by us! Khinchuk jumped up. “Yes,” Bülow agreed wearily. - Initially, the Daily Herald, a newspaper hostile to Germany, misunderstood everything ... Bülow sighed and finished: - Germany invariably stands on the point of view of traditional friendly relations with respect to the USSR, will never take part in any interventionist plans against the USSR and has no territorial claims...

Starting in 1933, such provocations by the Litvinov NKID against Germany, which had become National Socialist, continued almost until the very resignation of Litvinov ... But this major provocation was one of the first ... And after all, Litvinov was in London. And knew the

full text. And he tore out of him, the bastard, the phrase he needed, just the same with meat. And, it seems, he didn't pull it out himself, but took advantage of the Daily Herald's hint ... Moreover, at the same time, I must say, Molotov

was misinformed and provoked. Alas,

in exactly the same manner, immediately picking up and willingly inflating any provocations of the Western press paid for by the enemies of the European world, the "Soviet" press acted in relation to the "Pact of Four" ... But Mussolini did not ignore the

USSR - we are still in this make sure! And the "Pact of Four" was, according to his plan, not anti-Soviet.

He was anti-versailles! YES,

the PACT was attacked both from the "right" and "from the left" ... And he soon died, never ratified by anyone ... After all, immediately after its signing in Rome, French Foreign Minister Boncourt and French Prime Minister Daladier frankly admitted on July 6 to their Soviet colleague Litvinov, who came to Paris on his way from London from the International Economic Conference, that the "Pact of Four" is interesting for France only as a means of rapprochement with Italy ... ***"Obviously, there is a desire to pull Italy away from Germany,***

in order to completely isolate her, " his boss reported to the NKID.

And although in Italy they wrote that "thanks to the Duce, the mission of Rome becomes worldwide!", And Hitler sent the Duce a particularly enthusiastic telegram with congratulations, the pact did not become a significant real fact of the political life of the world. The warmongers of the war overseas and their European agents were not satisfied with the peace in Europe of the Italo-German model.

However, the pact became a bridge to the first personal meeting Chancellor Hitler and the Duce of the Italian people Mussolini...

This meeting in Venice on June 14, 1934 was reminiscent of a meeting between a teacher, the Duce, dressed in a full dress fascist uniform, and a student

- the Fuhrer, dressed in a baggy civilian suit ... The main topic was the fate of Austria ... After all, at that time the Alpine Republic was under the influence not of Berlin, but of Rome. So, in Austria, a *heimver* was very active - an armed fascist legion that demanded the fascistization of the country according to the Italian model. The young cavalryman Prince Shtaremborg and the gloomy Major Fey headed the *heimver*, and Mussolini financed it.

Strengthened, however, in Austria and local Nazis, supported, of course, Berlin. The Venice meeting ended

in nothing. And you can even say - the collapse. After her, the Duce said: "This importunate person, this Hitler, is a fierce and cruel creature. It makes us remember Attila... Germany is a country of barbarians and the eternal enemy of Rome"...

In fact, in 1932, Mussolini published a short work, *The Doctrine of Fascism*, where he called the German people "a people of higher culture" ... So Hitler could choose from two opposing assessments the one that was convenient for him.

He chose one - well - Attila, so Attila ... And if so, Hitler decided to act differently, and on July 28, 1934, the Austrian Nazis are trying to carry out a coup d'état. But the only success was the death of the pro-Italian Catholic Chancellor Dollfuss, who was replaced by a chancellor of the same kind Schuschnigg.

The Duce is also resolute - he is transferring 4 divisions to the Brenner Pass and is ready to enter Austria. At that time, he was fascinated by the idea of a Danubian confederation under Italian hegemony, and he was very worried about the possible advance of Germany to the Italian Tyrol, the Adriatic and the Balkans. And Mussolini really wanted to turn the Mediterranean

Sea into an "Italian lake." The Austrian putsch failed, and Mussolini makes a statement to the press: ***"The German chancellor has repeatedly promised to respect the independence of Austria. But the events of recent days have clearly shown whether Hitler intends to honor his obligations to Europe. It is impossible to approach with the usual moral standards a person who, with such cynicism, tramples on the elementary norms of decency."***

It was, of course, not a matter of morality - the Duce was well aware that a competent, nationally minded head of state is obliged

be guided by its interests and can be "decent" only to the extent that it does not contradict national interests. All the ardor of Mussolini could in fact be explained by one phrase from a memo from Litvinov's deputy, Stomonyakov, who, after the Anschluss of Austria in 1938, wrote about the problems of Mussolini, who received a neighbor **"strong Germany instead of weak and semi-vassal Austria"** They understood, understood Max Litvinov and his deputies the whole

naturalness of the Anschluss, although they shouted publicly about "the forcible deprivation of the Austrian people of their political, economic and cultural independence" ... The Duce understood this in advance, and therefore tried to avoid the

inevitable ... Therefore, he could not forgive then "student" of his pressure ... In August 1934, his irritation splashed out again

publicly - in a conversation with journalists in

Ostia. - What are your personal impressions of the Fuhrer? they asked him. "A disgusting sex freak and a dangerous lunatic!" How close are

fascism and Nazism? "German National

Socialism is wild barbarism! - in the heat of the moment, the Duce did not notice the tautology and the amusingness of the idea, which allows "cultural" barbarism. "European civilization will be destroyed if this country of murderers and pederasts is allowed to take over our continent!" A longtime friend, a talented

madman and confusion, the poet and writer Gabriele d'Annunzio, who received the title of prince from the Duce, responded even more sharply and even more enthusiastically: "I know that insight helped you cast aside doubts and push out this scoundrel, Adolf Hitler, with his nasty, always smeared muzzle in paint. With his monstrous clown's bangs ... This dirty man is able to smear everything human and divine with his clumsy brush with blood.

Soon, d'Annunzio will publish a collection of speeches and articles "Teneo te, Africa" ("I hold you, Africa!"), Where he will sing of the Italian aggression in Ethiopia, when the ruins of Ethiopian villages were thickly smeared with the blood of women and children ... And this already somewhat depreciated

the pathos of the "whistleblower" - he did not like Nazism and the Germans because of his own extreme slovenliness of thoughts and feelings, to which German

rationalism was alien. Emotional and duce. And on April 11, 1935, he convenes a conference in Stresa in connection with Hitler's refusal on March 16 to further comply with the military articles of the Treaty of Versailles and Germany's decision to restore universal military service.

Flandin and Laval came to Stresa from France, Macdonald and Simon from England. Italy was represented by Duce and Fulvio Suvic. Italy proposed

sanctions against the Reich, but England evaded this, and here everything was limited to the expression of "regret" about the arming of Germany. We also agreed that we reaffirmed our common loyalty to the principle of preserving Austria's sovereignty.

In EUROPE, they immediately started talking about the "Stresa Front", but the child of the world turned out to be stillborn.

First, on October 3, 1935, Mussolini launched an invasion of Ethiopia. And not everyone in the world likes this, and Germany takes Italy's actions calmly.

Secondly, on February 16, 1936, the Popular Front wins the elections in Spain. This is by no means a step towards socialism, but after that it was already possible to call Spain "pink" ...

Thirdly, on March 7, 1936, Germany fully restores its jurisdiction over the demilitarized Rhineland, introduces troops there and renounces the Locarno agreements. France again only regrets and protests - but nothing more. The Duce cannot ignore this ...

Fourthly, at the beginning of May 1936, the Popular Front was also victorious in France. Socialist Léon Blum becomes prime minister. France already gives off a certain redness, some social reforms are being carried out there, and on June 18 Blum even dissolves extremist fascist unions.

Fifthly, on July 17-18, 1936, a fascist revolt begins in Spain. Its head, General Sanjurjo, received Berlin's assurances of support back in March. He received them in Rome...

All together, and brought the Duce to the need to somehow negotiate with the Fuhrer.

They agreed. Even before the mutiny, Admiral Canaris, the chief of military intelligence of the Abwehr, on behalf of Hitler, came into contact with the head of the SIM, the Italian military intelligence service, Colonel of the General Staff Mario

Roatta ... 49-year-old Canaris and 47-year-old Roatta, who was a military apache in Berlin in 1930, developed a plan for the possible connection of Italy to the planned rebellion, and Mussolini approved it ... Roatta, already in the rank of general, later headed the Italian expeditionary force in Spain.

On July 22, 1936, José Sanjurjo died in a plane crash, and his functions were taken over by the commander of the African army, Francisco Franco. He immediately sent liaison officers to Berlin and Rome asking for help. On July 28,

German and Italian aircraft began to transfer Franco's troops from Tetouan in Spanish Morocco through the Strait of Gibraltar to Andalusia. On August 2,

formations of German and Italian ships entered Spanish waters ... In August, Mussolini

received such a slap in the face from France, which, given his character, also, presumably, influenced the situation ... After all, he organized the "Stresa Front" with France in support of Austria, and he publicly attested Hitler - how is it? - "disgusting sexual geek and dangerous madman" ... And now he, along with this "geek" is marching to Spain ... Y-

yes ... And Mussolini invites Leon Blum to sign a joint

agreement on ... non-interference in the affairs of Spain. I don't know how sincere he was here, but objective circumstances made such a step of his quite reasonable.

Having a lot of problems in Africa, exhausting yourself also in Spain was a risky business. Hitler was clearly inclined to interfere in Spanish affairs in one way or another with weight, and, moving away from them, Mussolini could count on the fact that the growing sole participation of the Germans in the intervention - without the help of Franco from Italy - would lead to a diversion of Germany's attention and forces from Austria.

And at the same time it was possible to improve relations with France. But Blum not only refused. He simply did not answer the Duce, and soon publicly declared: "I trust Mussolini no more than Hitler. I would shake hands with Hitler, but I would never shake hands with Mussolini."

And then he ordered to break off all contacts with Italy.

The slap in the face, as we see, was still the same ... But why did

Blum refuse? Perhaps

this is why ... HOWEVER, at first - a small digression ...

The "socialist" Blum announced the reason for such a harsh reaction de Duce responsible for the death of Matteotti.

Giacomo Matteotti - a prominent Italian socialist, deputy since 1919, in April 1924, spoke at the first meeting of the new parliament with a sharp exposing anti-fascist speech, and was soon kidnapped and killed on June 10. Mussolini was then only mastering the role of the leader of the nation, and his position was from a solid distant.

Matteotti seems to me a figure not so clear. The same age as the Duce (both born in 1883), a lawyer, a wealthy landowner from the Lombard town of Rovigo near Venice (Mussolini called him a "millionaire socialist"), he was preparing to publish some revealing documents, but his anti-fascism was more of an aristocratic wing, although Matteotti was listed according to the "socialist" "department".

After all, Mussolini was an adherent of real and broad social reforms, and he had both the power and the support of the active part of the broad masses to carry them out. Moreover, he has already carried out such reforms! Actually, the Duce himself started out as a socialist, but fed up with leftist chatter, he - a man of action - began to act, creating his own "corporate system". It wasn't socialism, but it wasn't quite capitalism either...

That is, Mussolini then acted in such a way that the large landowners and other large owners had reason to be alarmed. Later it became clear that many fears were exaggerated. But after all, this became clear later ... Yes, and the fears were somewhat justified - the concept of "capitalism" was abusive for the Duce.

By the way, Mussolini and laws against Freemasonry, introduced. And the "democrats" condemned them as "anti-democratic"...

Fascism, like Nazism, which later gained power and the opportunity to reform, was a very complex phenomenon. Let us recall at least the words of the Duce, which he said to Goering in the spring of 1939 in the Venice Palace about the similarity of Soviet and fascist goals in the fight against plutocracy ... And there was nothing wrong with that - the goals were quite worthy and noble. In the

USSR, even such a clever man as Stalin, almost the only creative Marxist by the beginning of the thirties, defined these two mass social movements as the dictatorship of the most reactionary circles of capital, but this was still far from

So...

The most reactionary circles are always so contemptuous of the "cattle" that the very idea of a significant and sustainable improvement in their position is hateful for these circles. It is enough to read, for example, how a natural representative of the elite, a graduate of the closed aristocratic school of Harrow and Beliol College Oxford, Leopold Emery, a member of the board of the Cammel Lairds military shipbuilding company, director of the Southern Railroad railway company, president of the Imperial Sugar Federation, director of the Darmanpend South African gold-mining Canadian president of the agricultural company Trust and Lawn, who also has interests in the mining industry of Australia and South West Africa, evaluated British miners who to work after an unsuccessful strike on the terms of the mine owners: "It was a defeated, but holding a grudge army", or with what disdain he ridicules Hitler's introduction of workers on boards of directors in order to understand how chemically pure the elite is reactionary and implacable towards the masses.

In Russia, the Bolsheviks solved the problem most thoroughly, saying that "only we, the workers of the world, great army of Labor, have the right to own the Earth, and parasites - never"! In Italy, and later in

Germany, two authoritarian and bright leaders offered the masses their alternative to the Bolshevik method of resolving the contradictions between Labor and Capital and

declared that in a strong nation-state, class cooperation was possible.

The Bolsheviks generally rejected Capital.

The Duce and the Fuehrer did not reject him, but they were not inclined to put his interests at the head of their policy. Their social policy was very strong and effective. She, like the Bolsheviks, directly appealed to the masses. And this could

not but arouse hatred among the most elite (and, therefore, automatically the most reactionary) part of Italian society. The most elite (and, therefore, automatically the most reactionary plus cosmopolitan) part of the wealthy strata of the planet could not like this either.

As I guess, Matteotti and the circles behind him simply wanted to protect the interests of the right with a left phrase. Well, in fact, it was not a proletarian republic, instead of a corporate republic, that the Duce called for the "socialist" Matteotti to build in Italy!

And what kind of "socialist" is there! In 1922, Matteotti left the Italian Socialist Party, along with its right wing, and formed the so-called United Socialist Workers' Party of Italy. He became its secretary, led a fierce campaign against the Communist Party of Italy, but to fascism - as a political trend - he was quite loyal.

That is why the "Matteotti Affair" seems to me to be something like the ancient French "Dreyfus Affair". There was a lot of noise around him in the Italian press. And the "democratic" press never makes noise for nothing, it makes noise only for a lot of money...

From the rostrum of Parliament, Matteotti accused the Nazis of that. that their march on Rome was financed by ... Freemasons. Well, the "young fascist wolf" Italo Balbo was really fond of Freemasonry. But such accusations by no means excluded Matteotti's own freemasonry. Very much the brothers-"masons" were always masters of multi-way combinations.

The invisible forces of Freemasonry know how to "create public opinion", and Matteotti's murder (it's still unclear who provoked it) almost brought down Mussolini, although even Matteotti's widow believed that the fascist leader had nothing to do with her husband's death and was deeply shocked by it. It was so, by the way.

Nevertheless, Blum in 1936 pulled out this old dirty linen of the 24th year, turning it into an anti-Italian banner ... But why? I

think the

point here was in the personality of Blum himself ... Like Matteotti, he was far from being born in a hut ... Even in his youth, in the late 90s of the XIX century, he became a socialist for careerist reasons, without breaking his ties with monopoly capital. These ties only strengthened over time, both because his newspaper, the organ of the Socialist Party Populaire, was financed by large entrepreneurs, and because Blum was a member of the board of the largest Parisian department store, Galleries Lafayette. Such is the leader of the "People's" front ...

Blum did not particularly hide the fact that,

in his opinion, France should follow in the wake of the United States. And even more than that - later (in the 40s of real history) he did not hesitate to write in "Populaire" about the desirability of eliminating the sovereignty of France and all of Europe in general, about the beneficial nature of the world domination of the United States, about the desirability of a "world government" and a "superstate" ...

Mug of globalism, cosmopolitanism and secret Freemasonry bulged here from every thesis.

This is how Matteotti, "who died at the hands of the reaction," turned out to be a defender and admirer ... The detail, as people in the know say, is a landmark! The United

States, as we know, was preparing a new world war, the beginning of which was again supposed to be initiated by an intra-European conflict. Mussolini's

position was objectively capable, on the contrary, of smoothing out sharp corners and easing tensions. But the globalists needed something else... And Blum

finally pushed the Duce in the direction of the Fuhrer... Yes, he himself glanced in the direction of Berlin more and more often... HITLER was quite satisfied with this development of the situation. Blocking with Italy and giving her a leading role in helping Spain, he, in turn, distracted the Duce from Austria, giving him his favorite toy - the idea of the Italian Mediterranean ... And approaching the Duce, the Fuhrer tore him away from the Anglo-French.

But the Duce was also afraid of excessively warm relations between Germany and England ... Yes, and France.

As a result, the movement of the two leaders towards each other turned out to be mutual, reciprocal. Blum,

at the suggestion of his "apron" brothers, "freemasons", gave the Duce a "splash". But the Führer soon after notified Rome that he was ready to recognize the new status of the Italian kingdom as an Italian empire. The rest of the great powers abstained from this, and for Mussolini, who considered himself an ancient Roman, this was flattering. Ciano visited Germany from 21 to 24 August. Arriving at the Nuremberg Congress, he held

talks with Foreign Minister von Neurath. Then Hitler himself accepted it. In September 1936, the Führer sent Minister of Justice Hans Frank to the Duce. Frank spoke Italian well and had to invite the Duce to Berlin without

the extra ears of interpreters. Frank left, and Ciano arrived in Berlin at the end of October. and 25

October 1936, the parties signed their first agreement.

On November 1, Mussolini delivered a speech in Piazza del Duomo in Milan... "Meetings

in Berlin," he said, "brought a significant look into the negotiation process between the two countries... The Berlin-Rome Treaty is not so much a link between Germany and Italy as an axis around which will gather all countries filled with the will to cooperate and peace ...

However, there was still almost a year before the complete turning point in the relationship. But the Duce conducted a dialogue with London, concluding with him, as we remember, on January 2, 1937, the first "gentleman's agreement."

Two days later, on January 4, Goering appeared in Rome to clarify the course of affairs. But the main thing that he manages to find out is that the Duce is not inclined to make any concessions on the "Austrian"

issue. "I think strategically the Anschluss is inevitable," Goering throws a probing question. - No, - Mussolini shakes

his head, - there can be no question of changing the status quo ... - Perhaps we will discuss these issues

during your visit to Berlin? Goering probes again.

- What, is it already decided? - Duce is surprised. - I'm not talking about it.
Don't know...

He refused to visit Berlin 5 (five) times! But when he went there in September 1937, they greeted him like an ancient Roman triumphant - during the week, parades, reviews, rallies and receptions followed one after another. In Mecklenburg, great maneuvers were arranged for him with using tanks. In Essen he was shown the Krupp factories...

Mussolini received a full understanding of the possibilities of Germany and the Fuhrer and was subdued. The visit ended with a grand rally at the Olympic Stadium in Berlin. Hitler spoke of Mussolini as a man who is not subject to history because he himself creates history.

Searchlights, black SS uniforms... Fanfares play the march from Aida... The stadium roars: "Heil Duce!" Touched by the Duce, standing on the podium in front of the thousands audience, throws into the microphone:

- Italian fascism has finally found a friend, and he will go with his friend to the end ... We are fighting to prevent the decline of Europe, to save a culture that can still be reborn, provided that it rejects false and deceitful gods in Geneva and Moscow ...

Lightning flashed over the stadium, thunder rumbled ... And soon an autumn downpour poured from heaven ... Passions, however, he did not extinguish ...

In BERLIN, the Duce attacked the "false and deceitful gods" both in Geneva and in Moscow...

By that time, almost a year had passed since Ribbentrop and Viscount Musyakoji signed the anti-Comintern pact concluded between Germany and Japan. This happened on November 25, 1936, and Italy joined on November 6, 1937 ... In the autumn of 1936, Italy and the Reich were just beginning a real mutual acquaintance, and about a month before November 25, just (in June) appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs Ciano brought Hitler the Foreign Office dossier "The German Danger".

A copy of it was stolen in London by Italian SIMs, and now it Hitler read, and Ciano silently watched his reaction ...

The Fuhrer read the document carefully, after finishing, he was silent for a minute, and then angrily asked:

“So, according to the British, there are two countries in the world led by adventurers: Germany and Italy?” “As you can see, Herr Chancellor! “But the British Empire was also built by adventurers. And here now it is ruled by mediocrity! Ciano politely kept silent, and the Fuhrer continued: "You see for yourself that the alliance of democracies must be opposed by our alliance!" We must go on the offensive! “But it will alarm a lot of people!” - Yes! And in terms of tactics, we use anti-Bolshevism as a maneuver. And then those who fear pan-Germanism or Italian imperialism and might unite against us will be more inclined to the contrary. Yes, if they see in the German-Italian alliance a barrier against the internal and external threat of Bolshevism.

Ciano was silent, but already extremely interested, and Hitler explained to

him: - My plan is this ... If England sees that a constellation of states is gradually being created, ready under the banner of anti-Bolshevism to form a united front with Germany and Italy, that we have created a single bloc in Europe, in the East, in the Far East and even in South America, then it will not only refrain from fighting us, but will try to find means and ways to come to an agreement with this new political system ...

- And if not? Ciano perked up. - Well, otherwise - if England continues to plot plans of attack and seek to gain time, we will simply defeat her, because the arming of Germany and Italy will proceed faster ... - But England's potential is still great! - objected the envoy of the Duce ..

- Oh! It's not just about building ships, guns and planes! The British will

still have to embark on a much longer and more difficult spiritual re-equipment ... Hitler's plan was extensive and not stupid. The bloc in Europe is Germany, Italy, Spain, Hungary... East is Poland.

The Far East - Japan and the regions of China dependent on it, primarily Manchukuo ... In

South America, the positions of the Germans were also very strong. Suffice it to recall that Ernst Röhm created the army of Bolivia in the 1920s... But

Hitler's (and Mussolini's) anti-Bolshevism did not mean automatic anti-Sovietism. In Meer-Max Litvinov, his anti-Nazism was heavily reinforced by Germanophobia as such. And by the mid-thirties, he planted a lot of "splinters" into the "body" of our bilateral relations with the Germans ... But Hitler did not

unequivocally identify two seemingly close concepts. And in a confidential conversation, he saw as the core of his anti-Bolshevik bloc not the idea of destroying the Bolshevik USSR, but the creation of such a political system of states where anti-Bolshevism would be the basis, first of all, of domestic policy. On the whole, such a concept was by no means automatically

oriented toward war. If you look at it, it was not war-oriented at all, using anti-communism as a really tactical means to buy time to get stronger and take on the leadership function in Europe. Actually, these were the old ideas of "Middle Europe" under the German hand, rethought taking into

account new realities ... Previously, the economy was supposed to be the base of the union. Now, a world view... Shortly after the Fuhrer's conversation with Ciano, Hitler's plan was initiated by the signatures of Ribbentrop and

Musyakoji. But this plan, I repeat, was not conceived by him as anti-Russian and anti-Soviet.

And for Mussolini, everything was not so simple. We still
We'll see that in due time.

ON THE RETURN in early November 1937 to Rome from Berlin, which grandly honored him, the Duce was met at the station - except, of course, others - and Gabriele d'Annunzio ...

"This union will lead Italy to collapse," he warned the Duce. -
Nonsense!

France has been and remains our best ally! - Stupid
nonsense!

- You're the fool!

The enraged former friend retired to his villa near Lake Garda - to the young beautiful Austrian nurse Amy Heifler, and for the Duce a period of "Austrian" doubts begins ... After all, he once publicly declared: "I will never allow Austria - this stronghold of the Mediterranean - to become a victim of pan-Germanism." Although, shortly after the conclusion of the Anti-Comintern Pact, he somehow abandoned that he was tired of defending the independence of

Austria ... Doubts ended on March 10, 1938, when Mussolini received a personal letter from Hitler. It was handed over by the Führer's personal representative, Prince Philip of Hesse, son-in-law of the Italian king, married to his daughter, Princess

Mafalda. ***"At the present time," wrote the Fuhrer, "I am determined to restore law and order in my fatherland. With all responsibility, I want to assure Your Excellency, the Duce of Fascist Italy: 1) I consider this step only as a necessary measure for the purposes of national self-defense ... 2) At a critical hour for Italy, I confirm the steadfastness of my good feelings towards you. I ask you not to doubt that they will not undergo any changes in the future. 3) Whatever the consequences of the forthcoming events, I have drawn a clear boundary between Germany and France, and now I draw the same clear boundary between Italy and him. This is Brenner. The decision I made will never be questioned, let alone changed."***

And on March 12, Hitler enters Vienna ... The day before, on Friday, March 11, at half past ten, Prince Philip called Hitler from Rome.

I have just returned from the Palazzo Venezia. The Duce reacted to the letter very friendly and conveys his best wishes to you ... He said that his position was determined by friendship, consecrated by the "Axis" ... In Berlin,

they clearly and with satisfaction took a breath ... -

Please, tell the Duce that I will always remember this!

"Understood, my

Fuhrer! "Always, always, always!" No matter what happens. I am ready to go hand in hand with him, no matter what happens! - Yes, my Fuhrer!

"If he ever needs my help, if he is in danger, then I will be by his side, even if the whole world is against it."

him...

- Yes, my Fuhrer!

Hitler was a sincere nationalist and loved his homeland, and his homeland was Austria, although he was keenly devoted to the idea of Greater Germany. Which, however, I could not imagine without Austria ...

The position taken by the Duce in the end was, above all, realistic, but do people always, and even more so, state leaders, behave sensibly?

And Hitler was grateful to the Duce, first of all, as a human being ... After all, tomorrow the former boy Adolf was facing a day that would frighten him with the unknown and, perhaps, bring the sweetest triumph - the happiness of the reunification of his small German Motherland with the great Motherland ... By the evening of March 11,

tension reached its maximum, and the Duce's answer immediately discharged him ... However, the

Duce himself was far from joy, like the Italians, in the eyes and in the souls of which the Duce immediately faded ...

And Mussolini's nervous reaction was expressed in the fact that on April 16 he concludes a "second gentlemen's agreement" with England.

But the general course is already almost decided. As they said in Berlin, the Duce was almost ready to go with Germany to the end ...

As for d'Anunzio, on March 31 he found his end in his own lakeside villa. And Amy Heifler, having disappeared, soon appeared in Berlin. And the "timely" death of the Germanophobic poet put a psychological end to the anti-German past Duce.

On May 5, 1938, he met with great pomp in Rome Hitler, who had come to him on a return visit. The Italians are initially restrained, but Hitler knows how to win sympathy, including women's. He attracts men by making it clear that there are no more controversial issues between the two powers and there will be no more, including the topic of South Tyrol.

In 1922, at the initiative of the engineer Pieri Puricelli, the Duce began a program to build the first motorways in Europe. Actually, this word also has an Italian root from "strada" - "street", and the later German "autobahn" ("bahn" - "way,

road") is just a verbal tracing-paper from Italian, like the Nazi program of the imperial autobahns itself. The Duce and his

guest rush to Naples along the brand new motorway-autobahn. There they were waiting for a naval parade, stormy meetings, the Gulf of Naples ... The submarines, imposingly frozen in the parade in a considerable number, suddenly, like one, began to boil water around them and at the same time sank. A few minutes later they fired a torpedo salvo in the same synchronous manner. Hitler, Duce, king, important

guests watched this from the board
the cruiser "Cavour" ... The cruiser "Julius Caesar" stood nearby on a barrel ...

Blue bay, Italian May, cheerful Neapolitan
songs...

When Hitler returned, he confessed in a close circle: -
Naples! Except for medieval castles, it could well pass for a South American city ... But the courtyard in the castle - what amazing proportions, how everything is thought out, how one goes with the other! Hitler fell silent, and

then dreamily said: - My dream is to come
here as an unknown artist and just wander around here. Then he
shrugged his

hands and finished dejectedly: - Where is it!
Instead, there are detachments here, detachments there, and even the Duce, who, of course, is a grandiose personality, but at most three pictures are enough for him So I didn't see any of the pictures...

At home, in the Reich, he, too, however, was no longer up to the pictures. The problem of the Sudetenland
was already

looming ahead ... And - Munich ... When the Sudeten problem reached its peak, it was smoothed out by the Duce as the initiator of the four-power conference in Munich in the same "layout" that made up the "Pact of the Four" ... And at the end of September 38, Mussolini felt like the arbiter of the fate of Europe - he is a mediator between the great powers, he averted the threat of war from the continent, he again helped the Fuhrer a lot, and he almost faithfully echoes him

in every gesture ... And just more than three months later, on January 15, 1939, Marshal Pietro Badoglio presents a gloomy report to the Duce. Ethiopian and Spanish campaigns devastated military depots... Severe shortages

equipment and fuel... Artillery is hopelessly outdated... There are no air defense systems, no heavy tanks, and in general it is bad with tanks. The Air Force is armed with obsolete aircraft with an almost depleted resource.

Yes, 1939 came to Europe. The last peaceful ... And Italy entered it heavily militarized, but weakly armed ...

Although young Italy is confident in its future and peers into it with the bright eyes of eight-year-old boys from the youth organization "Balilla". In a vigorous motorized formation, they roll through the streets of Italian cities on motorcycles to the greetings of an adult crowd...

The General Secretary of the National Fascist Party, fifty-year-old Akile Starachi, who devotes a lot of energy to the development of sports and strengthening the health of the nation, formulates the ideal of a young fascist: ***"For a young fascist,***

life is duty, improvement, struggle. We must live for ourselves, but above all, for others. Fascism believes in the sanctity of heroism and rejects selfish calculations. Life is a constant battle...

Germany is also confident in the future. And it is already very firmly backed up by weapons. But so far, Germany is expanding its influence still bloodlessly. On March 15, 1939, she entered

Prague ... The finale of the "Czech Rhapsody"

turned out to be not only stormy, but also fleeting, and the Duce was notified of it after the fact - by the Fuhrer's telegram ... A little earlier, on February 25, he talked with Ciano about Julius Caesar, not so much drawing analogies, how much sighing about the greatness of the plans of the one who lived on the same Roman land with the Duce almost two thousand years before him ... Obviously, therefore, on March 15, the Duce

throws Ciano in their hearts: - The union with Germany is so absurd that even they cry about it stones...

- Oh, duce! I'm desperate - your prestige is at stake! The Fuhrer assigns you the secondary role of a satellite, - Ciano immediately assented to his father-in-law ... But the Duce, he

was already cooling down:

- Germany is too powerful, and Italy should be on her side. There are only forty-two million of us, and there are twice as many Germans. What about England and France? - They are too

weak ... The result of such a sober assessment was the "Steel Pact", signed on May 22, 1939 in Berlin by Ciano and Ribbentrop. The Duce's son-in-law, however, remained internally cold towards the Germans. And he was more and more inclined to poke a stick into the "wheel" on which the "Berlin-Rome" axis rotated ...

For Hitler, the problem of Poland is now becoming urgent. And in the same summer, the situation around the position of Russia reaches its peak - in relation to Poland, in relation to the military alliance with England and France, in relation to the German Nazi Reich ...

Our relations with fascist Italy also had their significance ...

Chapter

6 Not all roads lead to Rome, however...

ON NOVEMBER 26, 1921, the chairman of the Russian economic delegation, Vatslav Borovsky, and Italian Foreign Minister T. della Toretta signed a preliminary agreement between the RSFSR and Italy on the settlement of a number of problems. On the same day, a similar agreement was signed between Italy and the Ukrainian SSR. This meant de facto recognition of

Soviet Russia by Italy ... As for de jure recognition, it was delayed ... That November, 1921, the Kingdom of Italy was still

fully illuminated by the sun of parliamentarism ... And in the same November, the 1st Congress of the Fascist Party was held in Rome . I must say right away that its 2nd congress was held in October 1922 in Naples. After that, everything in the party was determined by the leader - the Duce and the Grand Council of fascism, which since 1928, according to the constitution, became an organ of state power. On October 30,

1922, in the midst of the success of the famous campaign of the Duce blackshirts against Rome, King Victor Emmanuel III proposed to the fascist Mussolini to form a new cabinet of ministers. The Duce agreed, and in the

first fascist government, in addition to the portfolio of the prime minister, he retained the portfolios of the minister of the interior and the minister of foreign affairs.

And on November 1, 1922, a group of Nazis raided the Trade Department of the Representative Office of the RSFSR in Rome. One of the employees was taken to the stairs

and shot. Lenin then wrote to People's Commissar for

Foreign Affairs Chicherin: ***"T. Chicherin! Shouldn't we find fault with Mussolini and everyone (Vorovsky and the entire composition of the delegation) to leave Italy, starting to persecute her for the Nazis? - I should. Let's help the Italian people in earnest.***

Your Lenin.

In fact, everything was limited to the protest of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of Italy, because it is unlikely that Vorovsky's departure was beneficial to us. In support of what has been said, I will simply give an excerpt from a cipher sent by the same Lenin to Ordzhonikidze on April 5, 1921:

“Did the Georgian co-government confirm the concession to the Italians for the Tkvarcheli mines, when, what are the conditions... Secondly, about the Chiatura manganese mines: did the German owners be transferred to the position of tenants or concessionaires... It is extremely important that these... issues be resolved as soon as possible. This is of enormous importance both for Georgia and for Russia, because concessions, especially with Italy and Germany, are absolutely necessary, as well as commodity exchange for oil, on a large scale with these countries ... ”The

first "setting year" passed in Italy ... And on November 30 1923, the fascist prime minister declares that his government sees no obstacles to the recognition of Soviet Russia. On February 7-11, 1924, by means of an exchange of notes, normal diplomatic relations at the embassy level were finally established. With fascist, I note, Italy ... On February 8, 1924, the first Italo-Soviet agreement on trade and navigation was signed ...

And also - with fascist Italy ... Under the leadership of the Duce, Italy developed well, Russia developed even more successfully under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. The trade exchange between them also grew, from the ports of Italy heading for the Soviet ports of the Black and Azov Seas and back, cargo steamers cheerfully smoked their chimneys. With the

beginning of the thirties, the need for a new contractual reinforcement of economic trade relations became obvious. And on May 6, 1933, an Agreement on Trade Exchange was signed in Rome, in evidence of which they put their signatures and affixed the seals ***“Authorized representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Mikhail Levenzon, member of the Board of the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Trade and Trade Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in Italy, and Commissioner of Italy Cavalier Benito Mussolini, Head of Government, Prime Minister,***

***Secretary of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Corporations,
Acting Minister of Finance."***

Yes, Mussolini personally wished - as Potemkin, the plenipotentiary in Rome, reported this to the USSR People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs - to sign agreements and gave a magnificent banquet on this occasion at the Ministry of Corporations ...

Corporations, 22 in number, were in Italy the Duce bodies of state administration and regulation of economic life ... There were corporations of six workers and six business confederations in the areas of industry, agriculture, trade, sea and air transport, railways and river navigation, banks and insurance companies ...

And state regulation of the economy gave good results. Thus, the number of hospitals in Italy already in 1930 increased by four times compared to 1922, but infant mortality decreased by three and a half times.

New cars raced along the high-speed highway laid right on the roof of the main building of the Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino (FIAT) company, Aviation Minister Italo Balbo, at the head of a squadron of serial Savoia-Marchetti SM-55, circled half the world ...

In March 1934, it was announced that "all industrial assets owned by the four largest banks in Italy should be transferred to a state body" - the Institute of Industrial Restoration (IRI - Istituto di ricostruzione industriale). At the same time, Iran gained control over the entire economy, drawing into its orbit the Banca

commerciale Italiana, most of whose shares were previously owned by the Americans. Of course, all this was far from being as decisive as in the Land of the Soviets, but it was already

it is forbidden...

IN THE BEGINNING of May 1933, Mussolini signed a trade agreement with us, and on May 28, at 11 am, the Duce received the Soviet plenipotentiary Potemkin at the state residence of the Venice Palace.

- I'm leaving for two weeks in Moscow to inform the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs about the current state of our relations and their

prospects and considered it his duty to say goodbye to the head of government," the plenipotentiary said. "At the same time, I would like to tell you what conclusions I came to during the six months of my work in Italy ... Mussolini listened

carefully, and his expressive look was calm, and Potemkin got to the point ... - My general conclusion is that from the side of the Italian The government shows a desire to maintain and develop cooperation with the USSR. Mussolini nodded his head. - As an illustration, I can note, firstly, your personal efforts, Mr. Mussolini, and the efforts of your ambassadors in Berlin and Moscow to help restore friendly relations between the USSR and Germany. Secondly, the conclusion of Italian-Soviet trade agreements ...

Mussolini nodded his head again.

"Thirdly, as a vivid example of the benevolent attitude towards our work, I want to note the exceptionally attentive reception given to our military and naval attache by the local military and civil authorities during the last official trip of both to northern Italy. Mussolini smiled broadly, and Potemkin, smiling back,

stated:

- The government of the USSR is also imbued with a sincere desire maintain and develop friendly relations with Italy...

"Mr. Ambassador," the Duce stopped Potemkin, "I am very grateful to you for your assessment of our relations and I wholeheartedly subscribe to it. I would just like to add that, in my opinion,

current Italian-Soviet relations are not only

"friendly", but also "cordial" ... - I agree,

however, against the clear general background of Italian-Soviet cooperation, there are some passing shadows, - the expression on the face of the plenipotentiary immediately began to correspond to his last name, Mussolini became alert, and Potemkin explained: - It is about anti-Soviet speeches of the fascist press organs - Fascist Regime and Popolo d'Italia ... There, in particular, it is stated that the economic

our cooperation is transitory, but there are no prospects for political cooperation.

Mussolini grimaced, and Potemkin in an understanding tone finished:

— I am at a loss—after all, both you yourself, Mr. Prime Minister, and your government have more than once shown an interest in maintaining and developing both economic and political ties. And on your personal initiative, the question was raised about the contractual formalization of our political relations ... And here are your officialdoms ... Mussolini frowned even more and

answered: - I am grateful to you for frankly pointing out to me the presence of some shadows in our relations ... But their meaning is not should be exaggerated! The circulation of Regime Fascist is negligible, and it is published by a man who always wants to have a dissenting opinion. As for Popolo d'Italia, its article is devoid of tact and essentially wrong...

After a short pause, the Duce said firmly: "But this article cannot eliminate the undoubted fact that it was I who raised the question of concluding a political treaty between Italy and the USSR. -

Alas, things have stalled ... -

Yes, but if you found out whether the Soviet government considers it possible to conclude such an agreement, then I would fully subscribe to this opinion. Now Potemkin nodded his head, and Mussolini explained:

treaty is not only possible, but desirable and useful. And Mussolini began to bend his fingers, considering: - Firstly, this would contribute to the consolidation of international peace ... Secondly, our friendly relations would take shape more firmly ... And thirdly, and I consider this very significant, the treaty could eliminate doubts and fears called from the USSR by a pact of four powers ...

Mussolini briefly spread his palms, brought them together, paused and continued:

- The Soviet press expresses the idea that the pact can become an instrument of policy directed against the Land of the Soviets. But this is an erroneous

opinion ... Mussolini again began to bend his fingers ... - You already have contractual relations with Germany that provide the Land of Soviets from German aggression ... Recently a Soviet-French non-aggression pact was concluded ... You also have a pact with Poland ... England... Well, your conflict with England will no doubt be settled...

Mussolini clapped his hands. -

It remains to conclude an agreement between the Union and Italy, and this will neutralize all your doubts about the eventual direction of cooperation between the four powers ... The

Duce fell silent, took a breath and admitted:

- By the way, I claim paternal rights only in relation to the initial outline that was published in the report on the parliamentary debate in Rome. And in the future, three more fathers came together near my brainchild, who put the stamp of their influence on the project. The first amendments were made by England... Then France wanted to emphasize the connection of the pact with the Charter of the League of Nations, the Briand-Kellogg Pact... Actually, now the discussion is based on Daladier's text... - But

Poland... - Well,

this country makes a very unfavorable impression on me. It is difficult to understand what is there - a dictatorship system or a traditional squabble of parties ... In the end, Poland cannot play an independent role, and if France signs, she will have to come to terms with this ...

— We are also concerned

about Germany... — Yes, breaking traditional friendship with you would be madness for Germany, and abandoning the traditions of Rapallo and the Berlin Treaty would only weaken its position. I never cease to inspire this idea to my Berlin

friends... Potemkin began to bow, and the Duce

said: - Have a good trip! Immediately upon my return, I would ask you to be with me ... I will wait for you with great interest and hope that you will return with good news ...

POTEMKIN had not yet returned when Weinberg, Charge d'Affaires of the USSR in Italy, received on June 20 from the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs an information telegram from Deputy People's Commissar Krestinsky stating that Moscow had agreed to Mussolini's proposal to conclude a non-aggression pact.

Potemkin was entrusted with negotiating...

Such a smooth development of the situation was explained, of course, not by the kinship of the political regimes of the two countries, but by the obvious

reasonableness of friendly ties. In The Doctrine of Fascism, the Duce loudly proclaimed that the corporate state is all that the individual can be free only by uniting himself with the state. And it outwardly looked very much like practical approaches to the development of society in the USSR. But there were no rich people in the USSR. There were no people there at all who could have a significant income without working it out to the fullest ... In Italy, even when the Nazis introduced the spirit of collectivism, there was no shortage of wealthy property owners.

And yet we had no real zones of conflict with Italy - not even a political one. On the other hand, there were quite a few areas of realized or potential mutual complementation. However, there was a conflict - for the doctrine of fascism denied Marxism and socialism ... But ideology operates not with guns, but with ideas. A struggle in the realm of ideas does not automatically lead to a skirmish.

So on July 10, at half past six in the evening, Potemkin, who had returned from Moscow, was sitting in the same huge Mappamondo (World Map) hall of the Venice Palace, where the Duce

received visitors. - The Soviet government accepted with complete satisfaction your assessment of mutual relations as cordial ... - he told Mussolini - In the same way, it is satisfied with your assurances that the "Pact of Four" will not be used by its participants as an instrument of policy directed against the interests of the Soviet Union ... At the same time, we ready to start negotiations for the conclusion of a political pact between the USSR and Italy ...

- Wonderful! Your message satisfies me to the fullest! "And I want to point

out right away," Potemkin hastened to add, "that we do not oppose the Pact of Four to the London

conventions...

"Oh, I also think that there are no grounds for such a contrast," the Duce reassured him, and then said something that coincided with the confessions of Charles-Herve Alphand almost verbatim: -

I understand why part of the European press tendentiously opposes them! And above all, the French press is busy with this. In general, I consider it the most serious danger to the world. Especially the organs close to the Comite de Forge and the General Staff sow discord and mistrust among the peoples of Europe... And with regard to the USSR, this press is imbued with irreconcilable hostility... I would not advise your country to rely too much on friendly manifestations on the part of France... Mussolini spoke the holy truth, but Vladimir Potemkin, a pupil of the historical and philological faculty of

St. Petersburg University, although he had grown into the head of the political department of the front during the Civil War, was subconsciously and consciously indifferent to everything French and did not show the Duce much smile at these words ... And the Duce also added: - France - a country of greedy peasants, hoarders, rentiers, bourgeois through and through, France cannot organically be disposed towards the Soviet

Union. Sooner or later, but

you will be convinced of this ... Potemkin almost imperceptibly shrugged his shoulders, and Mussolini pointed his finger at him and warned: - I know for sure that Francois Ponce offered

Hitler to conclude a military alliance against the USSR.

"But you can expect that from Hitler!" "I don't think so... It's a pity that your relations are deteriorating, but I will remind Germany that if she started an adventure against you, fascist Italy would in no way support her and would not follow her along this disastrous path...

Mussolini then asked Potemkin if he had the Moscow draft pact with him. Potemkin took a piece of paper out of his briefcase and handed it to Mussolini. He took it, read it carefully, and said:

- The first two articles - without a doubt, we will deal with the rest ...

And at the end of almost an hour of conversation,
Potemkin heard: - In principle, I accept the Moscow project. And
the conclusion of the pact
should not be postponed! On August 29, almost all the controversial
issues were resolved, and the head of the political department of the
Foreign

Ministry, Kvaroni, came to Potemkin ... Kvaroni said without further
ado that he had come on behalf of the ill Deputy Minister Suvic to
convey the following: the Duce accepts all Soviet proposals and would
like to sign the pact no later than

September 2. And then I'll just give an excerpt from Potemkin's

encryption in the NKID: ***"...Based on the friendly nature of our relations, which excluded even before the signing of a pact of mutual attacks ... Mussolini advocates that our agreement should receive a more adequate name of a pact of friendship, non-aggression and neutrality. On behalf of Suvic, Quaroni... made it clear that our rejection of the proposal to expand the name of the pact would be perceived by Mussolini especially painfully. I ask you to take into account the last consideration, which I consider very important for our further relations ... "***

A positive response came on September 2, Saturday. And on September 2, 1933, the Soviet Union and fascist Italy concluded for an indefinite period with the possibility of denunciation by one of the parties, but not earlier than 5 years later for entry into force, the Treaty of Friendship, Non-Aggression and Neutrality, the essence of which was fully expressed in its name.

The pact was signed by Potemkin and Mussolini in a solemn ceremony in the presence of the entire leadership of the Foreign Ministry. Mussolini agreed with Potemkin that the news of the signing would not reach the press until Monday, September 4th.

So it was done, and on September 4, our plenipotentiary in London Maisky came to the head of the Foreign Office - Viscount John Allsbrook Simon. Sixty-year-old Simon is an anti-Soviet, honored and

skillful, chatted with Maisky for almost an hour, and towards the end, not without malice, but with the most amiable smile on

his face, he said: "Congratulations on your success in Rome!" Mr. Litvinov is making three non-aggression

pacts a minute! Maisky involuntarily and dissatisfiedly shrugged his shoulders in astonishment, and Simon, confused, hastened to add sourly:

and that's why I greet them...

Oh, by the way, Sir John was cunning here, he was cunning ... Four years later, after Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact at the end of 1937, the USSR protested in connection with this, but the agreement remained in force. LITVINOV protested

in 1937, but the change in the Duce's moods was largely programmed by the moods and deeds of Litvinov himself ... Even before the signing of the pact with the USSR, and even the Pact of Four, the Moscow ambassador of Italy, Attolico, spoke on June 4, 1933 with Litvinov's deputy Krestinsky ... Attolico

urged the deputy commissar:

"The fact that the initiative of the Pact of Four belongs to us guarantees you that the pact is conceived against the USSR. I assure you, he has no anti-Soviet edge ... - Eh!

The powers concluding this pact have too many points of difference and only one point of agreement: a common hostility to communism ... Attolico

shrugged his shoulders, for although it was difficult to argue with Krestinsky about the latter, Deputy Litvinov was hardly right about the rest. And Krestinsky summed

up triumphantly: "So, the non-invitation of us to your pact confirms that objectively the pact is directed against us... But even here Krestinsky was hardly

right... The pact was not anti-Soviet, but it was, I remind you, anti-Versailles. Well, if the Soviet Union and the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs Litvinov were accepted into the Pact of Four company as the fifth ... And what would come of it?

Imagine that four participants decide to jointly click on Poland on the Corridor issue...

And the USSR would have blocked everything ... And the likelihood of this was great, although the demand for a solution to the "Corridor" problem was objective.

The same could happen when the Sudeten question was put on the agenda. No, in these

subtle matters - given the foreign policy of the USSR that Litvinov pursued and personified - it would have been better to do without the USSR.

This became especially clear after Italy, on the night of October 3, 1935, began the conquest of Ethiopia. Aggression is aggression, but what did we have before the next colonial war, when England and France in their colonies waged them - quietly - almost constantly for decades. And Litvinov's NKID did not send any notes of protest to them.

By mid-February 1936, there were already 350,000 Italian soldiers and almost 15,000 officers in Africa, not counting 150,000 auxiliary forces. The expeditionary corps had 15,000 vehicles, 80,000 pack animals, 500,000 rifles, 10,000 machine guns, 300 tanks, 800 guns and 500 machine guns, and almost 2,000 radio stations. The Ethiopians had tens of thousands of rifles and a hundred cannons.

At that moment, our relations with Italy were very good. As early as March 14, 1935, Mussolini, in a conversation with our new plenipotentiary Stein and trade representative Belenky, was full of courtesy. With the Duce was his deputy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Suvic.

Stein started the conversation in Italian, and Mussolini congratulated him on his rapid progress in Italian (usually they spoke French). Besides, Comrade Belenky speaks

only German, and I would ask your permission to switch to it. Moreover, signor Suvic knows German very well. Mussolini immediately agreed ... Stein and Belenky planned to start with a general introduction by the plenipotentiary, and only then move on to specific difficulties with our exports. However, the Duce unwittingly violated their plan and immediately got down to business, asking Belenky a question.

- What do you hear and with what did you come to me? Belenky launched into explanations. Mussolini listened, and then asked Stein: - Are these

claims based on the contract? - Yes ... Suvic, for his part, confirmed everything, and Mussolini quickly stated:

"Then there is no question. The contract must be fulfilled. This goes without saying, and I will give all orders immediately. He paused for a moment, and after a pause he continued: "This, it can be considered, is over. The contract ends in two weeks. What will we have after? Tell me what to do Stein decided to laugh it off: -

We are still standing in front of an unknown X. Mussolini laughed: - You know, I don't like any X's. And Stein has already seriously answered that a new treaty is needed. - I agree, but on what basis do you think all this? Belenky

began to explain, the Duce was attentive and ended the conversation like this:

— I like the idea of a quick deal. I'll think it over and send my answer through Suvic tomorrow. The next day, Stein

telegraphed to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs: ***"Trade negotiations will begin in a few days ... The issue has been finally resolved in accordance***

with our requirements." And almost at the same time, in 1934, various kirshons in Moscow from the rostrum of the First Congress of Soviet Writers cursed the "bestial face of Italian fascism"...

After the events in Ethiopia began, Litvinov joined them, using the tribune of the League of Nations in Geneva for this. The

casket here opened simply ... By 1935, Rome, as we know, had fundamentally improved its relations with Berlin and for this reason alone became the capital non grata for Litvinov. And then such an occasion - the Duce began

aggression! A newspaper "tsunami" of "sacred anger" born of "bloody aggression" rolled over Italy and Mussolini from the Soviet Union ...

But if you think about it: well, what did we care about the Emperor of Ethiopia - Negus Negeste (King of Kings) Haile Selassie the First, "The Lion of the Conqueror from the Tribe of Judah" and the owner of twenty percent of the net profit of the National Bank of Ethiopia? His subjects were a courageous and sympathetic people, but very backward. There were enough of these in the two great colonial empires ...

If at least half of their profits were spent by the negus not even on people's needs, but on defense ... However, what can I say! Nevertheless,

Litvinov provoked the Soviet Union into a blatant anti-Italian campaign in the League of Nations, not to mention the traditional revolutionary internationalist hubbub of Izvestia, of which Bukharin became the editor ... Again - anti-Italian.

The result was expected... On December 11, 1935, Stein sent an emergency telegram to the NKID: ***"Today, Popolo di Roma published an article openly calling on Germany to attack the USSR. On the basis of a number of indications, it can already be foreseen that the possibility of a compromise with England will be accompanied at the same time by a fierce attack against us. The press will try to prove that the main enemy is the USSR, which is interested in sanctions in order to overthrow the fascist regime".***

So Max Litvinov "settle" our foreign policy problems ... THEN there was a Franco

rebellion, the battles of Italian "volunteers" against Soviet "volunteers", and in volume 40 of the first Great Soviet Encyclopedia in the article "Mussolini" the reader could read in 1939: "MUSSOLINI (Mussolini) Benito (born 1883), head of the fascist dictatorship in Italy. A teacher by profession, he joined the socialist movement... The ideology of M.—the ideology of the "enraged petty bourgeois"—was a disorderly mixture of elements of Blanquism, Sorelism, Proudhonism, and irredentism... In March 1919, M. organized the first "fascio" in Milan with a crudely November 1922 M. made his "march on Rome", as a result, state power was transferred to him as a representative of the most reactionary elements ... Widely

using methods of blackmail and deceit in foreign policy, M. at the same time squeezed the last juices out of the working class and peasantry ... " etc.

The article of the 40th volume of the TSB ended, where the executive editor of the "General History" department was S. A. Goldenberg, and the scientific editor on the topic "New History - France, Italy, Spain" was V. D. Weiss, as follows: "In September 1938 M. was one of the organizers of the shameful Munich Agreement, which meant the destruction of the democratic Czechoslovak Republic, given to the plunder of the fascist aggressors. The ringleader... of the fascist party, the chairman of the council of ministers... the head of the internal police detachments and bands of mercenaries... a shameless demagogue... M. is the most faithful servant of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic strata of Italian finance capital..."

So, professors Goldenberg and Weiss did not find a single kind word for the Duce, although the country of which they were citizens had at that time a friendship agreement with Italy, the initiator of which was precisely "M." ... So who was the hero of this

"encyclopedic » article in fact? On March 23, 1919, he held the founding meeting of the Fascio di Combattimento (Union of Struggle) in Milan, at which he declared: "We will allow ourselves the luxury of being both aristocrats and democrats, revolutionaries and reactionaries, supporters of the legal struggle and the illegal one, and all this depending on time, place and circumstance..."

Unscrupulousness? Perhaps... But in the name of what? Italy, if not the birthplace of political rationalism with its principle "The end justifies the means", then substantiated this principle with the ideas of Niccolò Machiavelli. However, Machiavelli did not belong to moral freaks. He simply understood that, approaching the life of society (and even more so - to its reorganization) with the standards of worldly morality, a political leader can bring evil to society instead of good.

Duce's comrades either by force - like Italo Balbo in 1920 in the Ferrara region - dispersed the strikes of agricultural workers, then created - like the aristocrat Dino Grandi in the same 1920 in the same Ferrara - agricultural trade unions.

The thirty-six-year-old Mussolini himself was given the following characteristic in his police file: **"Mussolini is**

a voluptuous man, as evidenced by his numerous connections with women ... Deep down he is very sentimental, and this attracts people to him. Mussolini is not interested in money, which gives him a reputation as a disinterested person. He is very smart, kind and well versed in people, knows their shortcomings and virtues. Prone to the manifestation of unexpected likes and dislikes, sometimes it is extremely vindictive.

You can't refuse an accurate psychological analysis of the Italian police, although it should be noted that the Duce could be **well**

remembered ... In Geneva, in his early youth, when Benito, who left Italy, did not have a penny in his pocket, but wore a medallion with a portrait of Karl Marx around his neck, he lived in the same apartment with a Bulgarian medical student Tomov... At that time, Benito - according to Tomov - was "not just red, but blood red" and declared that the bourgeoisie should not only be expropriated, but physically exterminated...

Three decades have passed, due to a malfunction of the ship on which Dr. Tomov sailed from Istanbul to Marseille, he had to stay in Naples. And he let the Duce know about

himself ... Telling about this story to his fellow countryman and colleague, Soviet intelligence officer Ivan Vinarov, the doctor took out a pack of photographs: they and the Duce at Villa Torlonia, in a car, on a boat, in the cockpit with the Duce in the pilot's seat, on the tennis court... In the corner of one of the photos there is an inscription: **"To my unforgettable friend in memory of an unforgettable**

youth spent in unforgettable Switzerland." In the same pile were the Duce's personal letters - on white and blue rice paper in chic envelopes with the national Italian coat of arms and the stamp "Personal Office of the Duce" ... And in one of them - the lines: "I again invite you to Italy . **If you are not satisfied with the position of a Duce doctor, you will head some clinic ... Or, if you want, I will make you a major administrator in**

the field of healthcare ... "In December 1921, at the founding congress of the National Fascist Party, a program was adopted that said: **"The functions of the state should be reduced to concern for maintaining political and legal order in the country"...**

And standing at the head of Italy, the Duce at the five-year meeting of the regime stated:

- For fascism, the state is not a night watchman, occupied only with the personal safety of citizens; also not an organization with purely materialistic goals to guarantee a certain well-being and relative peace of social coexistence, ... and not even a purely political creation without connection with the complex material reality of the life of individuals and peoples.

In The Doctrine of Fascism in 1932, he was even more categorical: ***“For fascism, the state appears as an absolute, in comparison with which individuals and groups are only ‘relative’... Individuals and groups are conceivable only in the state.”*** Duce Mussolini's “fascio” squads smashed the working quarters ... But the fascist Prime

Minister Mussolini already in 1923 introduced a five-day working week with an 8-hour working day, prohibited night work for women and boys, established accident insurance, assigned unemployment benefits, sickness and children. Women's clinics are being set up and maternity hospitals are being built... Infant mortality is falling sharply. The total amount of allowances for children is 344 million lira per year. This is about 15 million then very significant dollars. For the 20s in Europe, not so little ...

The Duce Prime Minister also begins to open summer camps for children from low-income families, sports and playgrounds, tourist bases for workers ... Already in 1926, 2 million teenagers were trained in the sports paramilitary camps "Balilla" and in the organization "Young Fascists". And the number of unemployed decreases from 541,000 in 1921 to 122,000 in 1923... The thirties for Italy were

years of very broad social programs, and even the global economic crisis had little effect on it.

The whole of Italy looked admiringly at the Duce. And she's not alone - oh Mahatma Gandhi declared respect for him ... And it was worth something ...

The campaign in Ethiopia was not uniquely the Duce's idea. Suffice it to say that the old enemy of the Duce volunteered for the army

socialist Labriola and Benelli, hostile to the Duce after the death of Matteotti. Deputy Mario Bergamo denounces the hypocrisy and greed of the Anglo-Saxons ... And the Italian masses do not understand why the world colonial powers England and France are protesting against what they themselves have been doing throughout the

20th century ... Yes, the Soviet Union should have been surprised then and just kept silent. We, unlike d'Anunzio, were not going to "keep" Africa... On the other hand, we had good and expanding trade relations with Italy.

There was no great need for us to go to Spain either ... Initially, there were no chances for brothers in the class to win there - the Popular Front of Spain was loose and liberal-bourgeois. But the Anglo-Saxons, who had considerable economic interests in the Iberian Peninsula, were very interested in eliminating German and Italian influence from Spain.

That is, our guys, without knowing it themselves, fought in Spain to a large extent for the interests of the City of London. And back in May 1939, they were paying for this - the Francoists held captive 102 sailors from the crews of the captured Soviet motor ships Komsomolets, Katayama, Tsyurupa and Max Gelts ...

RELATIONS between the Soviet Union and Italy by the beginning of 1939 were, if not curtailed, then there was no question of "cordiality", especially after Munich. Litvinov's anti-German line greatly contributed to the actual isolation of the USSR in Europe in general (not to take into account Litvinov's trips to the League of Nations and his speeches there, as well as Litvinov's fuss around the Anglo-French and Poles!).

Nevertheless, immediately after Munich, on October 2, 1938, the adviser to our embassy in Rome, Lev Gelfand, who acted as Charge d'Affaires of the USSR in Italy instead of Stein, who had left for the NKID, met with Ciano.

Ciano spoke enthusiastically about the complete surrender of France and said that the Fuhrer and the Duce jokingly identified the French Prime Minister Daladier as "a person who skillfully hides France's allied attitude towards Czechoslovakia." "The

Duce doesn't even want to think about an agreement with France," Ciano said and immediately inquired: "Are you not going to draw conclusions

from his "one-sided" pact with her? It seems to me that the USSR should think about better relations with Berlin and Rome ...

Gelfand did not react (and what could he, the temporary
to the attorney, it was necessary to dissolve the tongue here!) And he himself asked the question:

- And how, Count, do you assess the relationship between Berlin and London?
- I think Chamberlain and Hitler will come to an agreement ... Chamberlain admitted regularity of consideration of the colonial requirements of Germany.
- You in Italy, their rapprochement is hardly pleasant? Gelfand pricked Ciano. "Well, without us, Hitler will
not agree to an agreement and will not spoil Italian German relations," objected the smart Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The conversation seemed to be not hostile, but stupid. Ciano was not averse to talking to Gelfand, which, alas, did not improve real relations.

In fact, they got worse. Two months later, on December 9, a crowd of 200 people besieged the Soviet consulate in Milan, yelled, threw stones, broke the window and tried to break through the door ... It ended with the closure of our
consulate in Milan and the Italian consulate in Odessa ... The initiative came here, alas, from us, but the Italians were not very eager to somehow save the situation - the reputation of the USSR as a European magnitude was then very low ...

At this time, as we know, Tokyo would very much like to conclude a military alliance with Germany and Italy, but definitely against the USSR. Berlin and Rome were inclined only towards an alliance against the West, and things were going just for him, but - bilateral, "to the Steel." On January 1, 1939, Mussolini informed Ciano of his decision on the issue as a "New Year's gift" ... And on January 27, Litvinov sent a code to Stein in Rome: "We have **accurate data on the contract. You can share**

them with Philips (US Ambassador to Italy. - S.K.). **We are talking about a military alliance treaty between three countries** (Germany, Italy and Japan. - S.K.) ... "The" exact "data came from Sorge from Tokyo, although in this case they turned out to be in fact inaccurate. Intelligence is a delicate matter, but the correct assessment of intelligence data is an even

more delicate matter. Here to fall for disinformation - if it is cleverly tailored -

a couple of trifles ... But what was really accurate in this encryption was its end: ***“The divergence is that Japan would like to sharpen the treaty mainly against the USSR, while Germany and Italy insist on applying it also to France, England and United States, and Italy generally declares that it is not interested in a conflict with the USSR.*** Italy, on the other hand, was

interested in the conflict with France, because the Duce was inclined to present a number of claims to her. On April 8, Italy invaded Albania unopposed and occupied it...

But this year promised to be tense, not for this reason, but primarily because Hitler spoke more insistently and louder about the need to solve the problem of Danzig and the

Corridor. On April 28, he annulled the 1934 German-Polish non-aggression pact. Even earlier England and France had given Poland guarantees of its security. At the same time, they began their attempts to fasten the USSR to these anti-German

guarantees ... On MAY 3, 1939, the adviser to the embassy in Rome, once again left by Stein as chargé d'affaires, Helphand met with the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Italy, a member of the Grand Fascist Council, Edmondo Rossoni ...

Rossoni was alarmed and therefore talkative beyond measure: - We in Italy are very afraid of the German-Polish conflict. Hitler will get involved in an adventure and draw all of us into it, and the Duce is forced to follow him.

“Yes, your newspapers have begun to behave anti-Polish,” Helphand

agreed. - And this despite the fact, - Rossoni picked up, - that we have always strived to cultivate friendship with Warsaw ... Well, why do we need complications in the East ?! In the name of what - German interests? So they are extremely

unpopular with us. - And in the West? Gelfand decided that if I had to ask, then ask.

“Yes,” Rossoni nodded his head, “we would like to direct the pressure of the Italo-German bloc to the West. And if you do not connect to the Anglo-French guarantee system, then we would have a better chance of success, betting on the surrender of France ...

Gelfand transmitted the content of this conversation to the NKID with the note "Immediately"... He sent the encrypted message to Litvinov, but it was

Molotov who read it... Gelfand's next important contact took place on May 8, with Ciano himself. But between May 3 and 8, in addition to such an important event as the change of People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs in Moscow, another event took place - on May 6 and 7 in Milan, Ciano and Ribbentrop held negotiations, in an official communique of which it was said that both ministers "decided consolidate the close unity of both peoples in the form of a

broad political and military pact. Returning to Rome, Ciano immediately received Helphand and was quite friendly. At first, issues related to Italy's mediation between the USSR and Franco on the return of our sailors, including those seven from the Komsomolets, whom the Spaniards handed over to the Germans to exchange for German citizens arrested

in the USSR, were quickly resolved. Then the conversation turned to general political issues. - Can I congratulate you on your success in Milan? Helphand asked, and added: "But

what does that mean for us?" Nothing dangerous, I assure you! Ciano exclaimed. - I ask you to convey to Moscow that the upcoming alliance is absolutely devoid of anti-Soviet edge. That is why Japan does not participate in it ... - And the information that Tokyo is ready to join, if an Anglo-Soviet agreement? Gelfand objected.

- Newspaper ducks! The whole question is in the geographical direction of the tip of the military alliance. We defended and defended its purely continental, Western European direction, that is, the opposite of the USSR ... And on this issue we have full agreement with Germany ... So I see no obstacles to improving our relations with you towards friendliness. In any case, we in Italy would like that... He remembered Ciano and

Poland: "Hitler is irreconcilable in the Danzig issue, but I think that a compromise is possible. It will be easier to agree on the road through the "Corridor". In general, Hitler promised not to do anything against Warsaw for at least six months ...

HOWEVER, it became more and more difficult not to take decisive measures against the Poles ... The entire Polish political elite behaved like a bunch of pathological idiots, if ... Unless we

assume the obvious - that the leading part of this elite framed the "Oichizna" quite deliberately, leading ordinary Poles to war with the Germans in the name of the future dominance in Europe and in the world of the United States (by Freemasons!) ... Indeed, in Poland, the traditions of the reckless betrayal of its national interests by the aristocracy had very deep historical and psychological roots since the time of the famous "Flood" - the Swedish-Polish war of the second half of the 17th century ... And the fact that generation after generation of Polish

lords was brought up in such a spirit that they perceived it as a natural idea of erecting a notorious stranger to the Polish throne - even from distant France, if only this stranger could not encroach on the panorama's right to be self-willed, this fact is also about what said something...

And it seems that it was so: the "arrogant" cretinism of some successfully and mutually complemented the fundamental dishonesty of others ...

In this regard, it was interesting to get acquainted with the letter of the Vice-Director of the Political Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Kobylansky to the Polish Ambassador to Romania R. Rachinsky dated May 4, 1939 ... At this

time, Moscow was conducting a political dialogue with London, Hitler, in his speech in the Reichstag on April 28, announced the denunciation the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935 and made very transparent friendly political hints towards the USSR, and it was already clear that Rome would not go against Berlin on the Polish issue ...

On the other hand, on March 21 Ribbentrop presented to the Polish Ambassador Lipsky in Berlin the German proposals to Poland. These proposals were clear, realistic and acceptable:

1) Danzig is part of the Reich as an independent unit. 2) Germany receives the right to build an extraterritorial railway line and a motorway through the "Corridor" for communication with East Prussia .. These highways, by the way, would not

interfere with life inside the "Corridor", because the Germans proposed to run them either along a flyover above the ground, or in a tunnel underground.

The significance of Danzig for Poland was undermined by the Poles themselves, having built its own port of Gdynia near Danzig-Gdansk ...

What else did the Poles need?

However, Kobylansky's letter to Rachinsky breathed such self-confidence that, taking into account the true capabilities of Poland, it could not be defined otherwise than as "impudent" ...

The vice director wrote to the ambassador: ***"Ambassador Lipsky reports that during a conversation between Minister Gafencu (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania. - S. K.) and Chancellor Hitler, the latter ... spoke sharply about Poland and pointed out that Germany's last proposal was exceptionally favorable for Poland. Chancellor Hitler spoke quite aggressively about England as well. The chancellor, as well as Goering, raised the question of the colonies very sharply ...***

Minister Gafencu informed Ambassador Lipsky of his statements to the Chancellor and Ribbentrop... Mr. Gafencu pointed out that neither Poland nor Rumania wished to associate themselves with the Soviets...

Ambassador Raczynski (Edward. - S.K.) reports from London that Minister Hafencu told him that he was convinced that the British government did not want to establish close relations with the Soviets. Minister Gafencu believes that the current Anglo-Soviet negotiations will not yield concrete results.

Ambassador Lukasiewicz (Polish ambassador in Paris. - S.K.) reports that ... in all the conversations that took place, Minister Gafencu took a position regarding Soviet Russia that was identical to the position of Poland ...

In connection with the statement made by Ambassador Wieniawa-Dlugoshovsky (Polish Ambassador in Rome. - S.K.) that Hitler's last speech did not in any way change our principled position on the question of attitude towards Soviet Russia, Minister Gafenko told Ambassador Wieniawa, that he already knew about this from Ambassador Franasovich (ambassador of Romania to Poland. - S.K.)."

As for the Romanian's Italian contacts, the letter further stated: ***"In a conversation with Mussolini, Minister Gafencu emphasized that Poland's position is exceptionally calm and, just like Romania, it ... opposes rapprochement with the USSR. According to Minister Gafenko, Mussolini,***

in a conversation with him, showed great sympathy for Poland and at the same time expressed his fear that since Hitler openly raised the question of Gdansk (Gafenka and

Duce talked, of course, about Danzig. - S.K.), ***he will not want to give in, and an armed conflict due to the intransigence of the Poles can be fraught with unforeseen complications and consequences ...***

As a result of observations made during conversations in Rome, Minister Gafencu came to the conclusion that Italy would not actively intervene in a possible conflict ... "

Gafencu then traveled all over Europe with visits ... Germany was

very sorry for Romania, and he wanted to understand how in this situation to behave Romanians. It ended with the fact that the Romanians, having a sufficiently sound mind and realizing that all the "guarantees" of the West are not worth the paper on which they are given, did not resist Germany and went towards rapprochement with it. In this sense, Gafencu's assessment of London's "guarantees" is interesting: ***"Giving guarantees to Poland before a precise***

agreement was concluded with the USSR, England played into the hands of those who were interested in preventing the formation of an alliance between London and Moscow."

Well, to clarify that the cosmopolitan part of the London politicians played into the hands of Uncle Sam, then everything was said for sure!

And one more thing... As follows from Kobilyansky's letter, the Poles were well aware of England's unwillingness to restrain Hitler - the rejection of the bloc with the USSR proved this more than convincingly... And even knowing this, the Poles rejected any real guarantees from the USSR. N-yes! And on MAY 18, Gelfand chatted with Ciano for almost two hours! The duration of diplomatic conversations

between representatives of the two countries is recorded very carefully not only by these two sides, but also by many others ***on the side*** Therefore, the Soviet charge d'affaires tried a couple of times to curtail the conversation and

bow out.

And each time Ciano detained him, declaring that he was not going anywhere. in a hurry...

"You know I always take a great interest in our conversations," he explained kindly. - As a rule, I talk with other diplomatic representatives for no more than fifteen minutes.

After such a compliment to Gelfand, of course, nothing
left to stay...

A day later, on the 20th, Ciano left for Berlin to sign the Italo-German military treaty—the Pact of Steel... The conversation began with him... —
Whatever you say, I

regard this treaty as yet another capitulation of Rome to Berlin, — quite sincerely I must say, said Gelfand. - I am convinced that there was an initiative and pressure from Hitler. It is unlikely that he completely trusts you and wants to bind your future policy more tightly ...

- No! Ciano retorted hotly. - I ask you not to share what was said with local foreign diplomats, but I must inform you confidentially that Italy, not Germany, was the initiator of the military alliance. "But that goes against the laws of logic!" Ciano,

without saying a word, got up, went to the fireproof safe, turned the combination lock, clicked on the steel door and took out some kind of book ... - Diary, - he briefly explained. - Here I personally

enter the most secret summaries of my foreign policy negotiations. So, I'm reading the text...

A young chubby handsome man did a decent
paused the situation

and began: - The question of a military alliance was finally resolved on Saturday evening, May 6th. Earlier this afternoon I spoke with Mussolini, to whom I reported that I had obtained Ribbentrop's consent to all ... questions of interest to us. Mussolini, who is never satisfied with what has been achieved and always wants more, instructed me to immediately raise the question of concluding a military alliance. I conveyed this to Ribbentrop, who had some hesitation. He telephoned Hitler, and the Fuhrer accepted Mussolini's proposal with enthusiasm... That's it, dear

Mr. Helphand! Ciano read all this smoothly, but Gelfand had doubts, because the handsome man could have distorted. He showed the recording from his own hands, from a distance... And Gelfand decided to clarify:

- What are the reasons for this decision? I perfectly understand the benefits of the military alliance that Germany derives from it, but I see only its negative sides for Italy ...

Ciano smiled contentedly and, assuming an air of significance and mysterious, said:

"I can't say about all the reasons, but soon new facts will shed light, and our motives will immediately become clear to you ..." "Eh! This version doesn't stick well... - Italy wants to consolidate a

number of promises and obligations received from Germany with a military alliance. I can't say anything more," Ciano repeated. Gelfand, realizing the futility of continuing further

in this direction, changed the subject:

- Well, what are the prospects for German-Polish relations? - I told Wieniawa-Dlugoshovsky that Italy would be glad to resolve the problems and is ready to take on the role of an intermediary between Germany and Poland ... However, Warsaw should not have any doubts: as soon as the Polish-German conflict arises, Italy will immediately and mechanically take the side Germany... -Will it arise? - We do not foresee a conflict in this part of Europe ... In six months, a Polish-German

agreement will not present any difficulty. Hitler is adamant about Danzig, but we must not forget that ninety-two percent of the population there are Germans. On the question of the Corridor, Hitler agrees to two underground tunnels - for the railway and the motorway. The width of the corridor is small - only 38 kilometers! - A lot of work ... - Ah! Ciano waved his hand. - The Germans love all sorts of technical work, underground structures, and the Poles will receive moral

satisfaction ... - That is? - Well, they will be able to say that Hitler does not capture the "Corridor"

and for the sake of an agreement with them, he is even ready to climb underground ...

Ciano clearly overestimated the common sense of the Poles and underestimated the "hand of Uncle Sam", whose fingers were all sorts of sirs, monsieurs and pans in Europe ...

Without protesting, Gelfand decided to find out something else: - And what about your problems with France? At the end of April, you said that the French would surrender and start negotiations with you on their own initiative. But Daladier is holding firm and is not about to embark on the path of surrender... Ciano

grinned and remarked ironically: "Your French 'allies' don't inform you well..." Gelfand silently shrugged his shoulders, and Ciano suddenly became angry and hateful.

stated:

- If you want to know, they keep sending us unofficial intermediaries with counter-proposals in response to my decoding of the Italian requirements François Poncet, during his last visit to me, with his usual antics, asked about them, and I deciphered everything to him specifically - on Tunisia, Djibouti and Suez ... The minister took a piece of paper with pencil notes from the table: - Here they are, these

counter-proposals! ... Of course, everything is done deeply unofficially, on the sly—the French are terrified of the noise in the newspapers because of the great difficulties in domestic politics... Then Ciano became very serious and said: "That's it, Mr. Helphand! I will tell you frankly that the prospect of an Anglo-French-Soviet agreement worries Italy, and it would be foolish to say that we do not understand the enormous significance of the inclusion of the USSR in an alliance with England and France ... I must objectively admit that the USSR is leading a very wise the policy and your conditions of England undoubtedly meet your interests. And all

or...

Here Ciano fell silent, looked at his interlocutor and continued:

- And, nevertheless, we hope that your agreement with England will not take place ... On the one hand, it would still be better for you to remain neutral for some time. On the other hand, we know the English quite well and the hatred of the Conservatives towards you. I assure you that although you consider us rabid fascists, we do not and cannot have such hostility towards the Soviet system and the Soviet regime, which the big English and French bourgeois have for them ... Helphand listened to

all this very seriously and attentively, and Ciano finished:

"Therefore, we think that England will delay negotiations and..." here Ciano again made a significant pause, "and there may come a moment when it will be too late and you yourself will not want to rush to join the coalition..."

Perhaps, here Gelfand should have clarified, as if he did not understand - in what kind of coalition...

And then Ciano, perhaps, would have asked: "What, do you see another coalition besides yours with the Anglo-French?", hinting at the possibility of a coalition of the USSR - what the hell is not joking - already with the Italo-Germans ...

But such a dialogue, perhaps even flashing in the minds of the interlocutors, did not get into the languages ... However, there was no particular need for this, because both were very, very intelligent ...

The author reminds the reader that Ciano expressed these thoughts after the April probing Goering's visit to Rome. That is, after the Duce and his son-in-law were already aware of Hitler's intentions to improve relations with Moscow.

Stalin was leaning towards the same...

And the fact that Ciano conducted his probing in the same direction objectively gave reason to see the contours of a very non-trivial European situation in the future. One where, on the basis of the friendliness of the three powers, the construction proposed by the failed "Pact of the Four" could be realized! The "Pact of Four" was doomed to collapse from

the very beginning, because its two participants, "democratic" England and France, were no longer independent in choosing their future. The elite of these countries basically already thought in terms of the interests of the entire world Golden Elite, that is, the interests of the United States, which are vitally interested not in peace in Europe, but in war. That is, the "Pact of Four" did not provide peace. But

the strategic friendliness of Russia and the German-Italian bloc, on the contrary, almost automatically provided Europe with a lasting peace. And not even long-term, but - with the smart development of relations - ETERNAL!

And if Japan joined this friendliness, then this could mean in the future, if not soon, then a very possible peace already for the entire PLANET!

A planet that got rid of the fate prepared for it by the Golden Elite and its stronghold - the United States ... The second hour

of the conversation was coming to an end ... The conversation was based on a political interest. And both understood it ... However, today everything was said and it was possible to finish

conversation is purely secular.

"Come in," Ciano invited Gelfand. "However," he smiled dreamily, "from next week I start going to the government beach, and there, I hope, we will meet."

Quite often... - Yes,

- agreed Gelfand, - it would be useful to take a dip in the sea. This summer promises to be hot... — Oh, yes!

Ciano agreed. Helphand wished

him all the best and thoughtfully said goodbye.

And Ciano left for Berlin a day later.

Conclude the pact that was the Duce and desirable, and tied it to the policy of the Fuhrer.

Chapter 7

Prepare for War in the Summer...

HITLER was indeed ready to yield to Mussolini in some respects, since he needed Italy's political support in the coming troubles. He was calm about Italy's spring occupation of Albania and was aware of Italy's demands on France. Back in April 1939, the Duce, at a meeting of the Great Fascist Council, said that the western border of Italy should advance to the Var and Rhone rivers, that is, he claimed French lands in the Western Alps zone. As, however, in Corsica, in Tunisia ...

Ciano, after one conversation with the Duce, made a note in his diary from January 8:

“Demands for France. We do not demand Nice and Savoy, for they are on the other side of the Alps. Corsica: autonomy, independence, annexation. Tunisia: the status of the Italians, ... a protectorate. Djibouti: free port and railroad, condominium-based colony administration, concession. Suez Canal: broad participation in management...”

However, Mussolini was aware of the military weakness of Italy, and he also needed at least the political support of Germany ... Mutual military support was

not ruled out, but the Wehrmacht looked at it quite definitely, as was clearly stated in the note of the General Staff of the German Armed Forces dated 26 November 1938. The note had the title “Considerations regarding the negotiations between the representatives of the Wehrmacht with Italy” and in section 2 “The main idea of the negotiations” established: “ ***No joint conduct of military operations in one area and under a single command, but the division of special tasks and theaters of military operations for each state ...*** ”

In section 3, “Military-Political Basis for Negotiations,” the Wehrmacht looked at the prospects as follows: “ ***War by Germany and Italy against France and England with the aim of defeating France in the first place. Thus, a blow is dealt to***

England, which, having lost a base for continuing the war on the mainland, will face the fact that all the forces of Germany and Italy will be directed against her alone ... "

That is, the conflict could begin without regard to the development of the "Polish" issue. At the same time, the German General Staff proceeded from the fact that Poland occupies a "dubious position", and Russia is "hostile towards Germany and Italy". This document

was also interesting in that it was precisely in the Wehrmacht that Russia was treated more loyally than vice versa. The long-term cooperation of the two armies and sober General Staff assessments also had an effect. But even in the Wehrmacht, as we see, there were different opinions ...

IN JUNE Strang came to Moscow from London, but in the summer of 1939 there was an increasing dialogue between Moscow and Berlin. However, Berlin also negotiated with London, but their success was about the same as the success of the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations that began in August

in Moscow. Things went to the implementation of the Weiss plan - the "White Plan", according to which the Black Imperial Eagle of Germany was to decisively prevail over the White Polish Eagle.

Of course, Hitler would have been satisfied with a peaceful option, but could it be peaceful?

On August 11, Ribbentrop and Ciano met for the umpteenth time in Salzburg. "Poland must understand that Danzig must return to the Reich," Ribbentrop declared almost immediately. The Fuhrer's demands are moderate, but the situation is aggravated by the fact that Poland wants to present us in Danzig with a fait accompli. — Do

you mean bringing in troops?

-Yes!

They also talked about preparing for a possible war. And Ciano asked his colleague: - What do you

want - Danzig or "Corridor"? - The Fuhrer has had enough of Polish provocations! Ribbentrop snapped. We want war. In any case, we are not afraid of it. Although personally I hope for a diplomatic solution to the issue precisely because the Fuhrer is so decisive.

Ciano, although the answer was, in fact, expected, looked
stunned:

- But the Duce wants to have at least one more quiet year. Italy is exhausted. We don't have raw materials, we don't have enough armaments, we don't have coastal fortifications... Ciano took a breath and continued listing complaints: "Nothing can be done from Libya... Our General Staff estimates the combat power of Italy and France as one in five... The results in Albania are disappointing... Ribbentrop listened to this from the bored look, and after listening, said: - We do not need your help. Ciano sighed: - The future will show... Ribbentrop's harsh and biting "inflexible" phrase was not accidental. Before meeting Ciano, he received clear instructions from Hitler.

"You must under no circumstances cause Ciano to doubt my resolve! Hitler instructed the minister.

- So we are ready to fight and want to fight? - If necessary - yes! Here is your line of conduct. But this was, of course, only a psychological "afterburner" of the situation ... Both the Fuhrer and Ribbentrop knew about the too long language of both Italian government circles in general and Galeazzo Ciano in particular. If Ciano in Obersalzberg had got the impression that the Fuhrer was indecisive, then, of course, they would have known about this in Rome ... But, alas, this would have

immediately become known in London, and therefore in Warsaw. And this would have made any political and diplomatic decision impossible in advance.

The next day Ciano was received by the Fuhrer. —
Do you really intend to solve the "Polish" problem this year? Ciano asked him. "We are running out of time reserves," Hitler replied. - In autumn, a successful campaign is impossible ... From mid-September, the weather will not allow the use of aircraft. From September to May, Poland is a big swamp and unsuitable for military action. And if Poland simply occupies Danzig in October - which is very likely, then ...

- And in what time should the issue with Danzig be resolved? One way or another, until the end of August. How do you imagine his decision? - Poland cedes Danzig, subject to its economic interests. For this and for ensuring communication between East Prussia and the Reich, I personally promised Beck during his visit to Obersalzberg a guarantee of borders and a friendship pact for 25 years ... - And Beck? .. - Then he said that he would like to study my proposals, but All

changed by the English intervention....

- So, what is next?

"And you, dear Ciano, read the Warsaw press," Hitler advised irritably. - From it one can clearly understand the goals of Poland. Irritated more and more, Hitler listed: - They want to capture the whole of East

Prussia, move up to Berlin ... And that's not all! Ciano involuntarily nodded understandingly, and the Fuhrer summed up: "It is unbearable for a great power for a long period to endure a neighbor who harbors such strong enmity towards her and is only 150 kilometers away from her capital. Therefore," Hitler's tone became especially brusque, "I am determined to use the first political provocation—be it an ultimatum, brutal treatment of the Germans in Poland, an attempt to establish a starvation blockade of Danzig, the entry of troops into Danzig, or the like, in order to collapse within 48 hours to Poland and solve the problem in this way. "But England..." Ciano tried to object... Without letting him

finish, the Fuhrer sharply minted:

"I am unshakably convinced that neither England nor France will enter into a general war ... Ciano listened and

was thoughtfully silent ... Then, some "Deflated", folded like a folding knife, he said quietly:

"You have been right so often, while we were counting otherwise, that perhaps this time you see everything better than us ...

Even the Fuhrer's interpreter Paul Schmidt was sure that Hitler said what he thought ... Schmidt was not present at

conversation between the Fuhrer and Ribbentrop, did not know that his bosses had decided to take the handsome Galeazzo, as they

say, "to the gun" ... After all, this Ciano's confidence in Hitler's denial of the danger of a war with the Anglo-French would also quickly reach London and Paris ...

On the same **day**, August 12, Charge d'Affaires of the USSR in Germany, Astakhov reported to Molotov in Moscow:

"The conflict with Poland is brewing at an increasing pace, and decisive events may break out in the shortest possible time ... The main slogans - "Danzig reunification with the Reich", "home to the Reich" - have already been thrown out, and not only the Reich, but the whole of German Poland is being

conceived ... » Here, perhaps, it is necessary to clarify the last two words... According to the Treaty of Versailles, Germany not only lost Danzig. Under the rule of Poland, not only the Germans in the "Corridor" zone were given, but also the vast lands inhabited by the Germans for several centuries and all this time were part of Germany - Poznan, part of East and West Prussia, part of Silesia ... The German cities of Thorn and Posen became be called Torun and Poznan. And life on these "Polish" lands was even

worse for the Germans than for the Germans on the "Czech" ones. Still - the "arrogant" Pole has much more arrogance than the Czech drinking light beer ...

It was about this "German" Poland that Astakhov wrote, reporting Further things are no less interesting:

"The press in relation to us continues to behave exceptionally correctly, and even notes about our successes in the field of construction (a note about the Kazan-Bugulma road) began to appear (a fact unprecedented to this day!) On the contrary, in relation to England, mockery crosses all boundaries of elementary decency ...

The Germans themselves, in official and unofficial conversations, do not hide the looming denouement and recognize the approach of such, albeit with reservations about the possibility of a "peaceful" solution of the issue on the basis of their spring demands (Danzig and extraterritorial communication with him through the "Corridor"). However, if the Poles had satisfied these demands, it would be hard to imagine that the Germans would refrain from raising the question of Posen, Silesia and the Cieszyn region. The question is essentially raised about the pre-war border (if not more).

As you can see, back in mid-August, the Fuhrer did not rule out a political solution to the problem if Poland were ready for it, but he perfectly understood that she was not ready for it.

And even if Hitler had raised the question of the pre-war border, would he, from the standpoint of the right to self-determination up to and including secession declared by the "democracies", be wrong?

He, Hitler, could not but take into account the factor of England, but could he - with the most unfavorable influence of this factor - refuse to act in Poland on this basis? After all, the "English" factor could not disappear, and the Poles, since the mess was already brewing, would only become impudent over

time ... Hitler did not rule out a military reaction from England, which he spoke about on August 14 in Obersalzberg. On that day, the chief of the general staff of the ground forces, Franz Halder, noted in his diary: ***"Now it is necessary to show abroad that under any circumstances, even if England intervenes, it will still come to a collision."***

Hitler could not completely exclude the military reaction of the West also because from mid-August the French put their powerful belt of defensive fortifications on the German border, the Maginot Line, on alert. The French were afraid of her detour from the south, and heavy guns were installed on the passes to Basel. In mid-August, Churchill, accompanied by the Chief of the French General Staff, Gamelin, visited the Maginot Line. And all this, of course, did not escape the attention of the Germans, as well as from the Italians.

Hitler was fully aware of the risk and bluntly uttered this word in those days in a trusted official circle - in front of the generals - often. Nevertheless, he quite consciously took this risk. The

Italians, on the other hand, were afraid of forcing events ... On August 15, the former German ambassador to the USSR, and now her ambassador to England, Herbert von Dirksen, went to the Italian ambassador in Berlin, Attolico, with whom he had been friends since their joint stay in Moscow. I came in in a friendly way, without warning and found a visitor at Attolico ...

"Wait a couple of minutes, Herbert, and I will have unlimited time to talk with you," Attolico asked.

"Of course, of course, Bernardo," Dirksen reassured him. Suddenly, an assistant came into Attolico's office and urgently called to the telephone ... Soon the German guest was invited to the excited ambassador, and he

blurted out excitedly:

- Ciano just called me and said that decisions had been made fraught with war with Poland. In doing so, it is assumed that England will not intervene. But it's not like that!

"Yes," agreed Dirksen, "but it cannot be that in Berlin and Rome did not take this into

account. No, no, you must warn them! - I'm

just about to present the relevant report. Even this did not calm

Attolico. He was still excited, in a hurry, and five minutes later the guest and the host said goodbye to each other ... In Moscow, too, they were preparing to

politely say goodbye - to the British and French military delegations. Ribbentrop was already expected in Moscow... On AUGUST 22, all the events that

were taking place so quickly merged into something generally kaleidoscopic... In the morning issue of Izvestia (as official government, not the party) they reported about Ribbentrop's imminent arrival in Moscow. In London, due to the time difference, this message was received on the 21st late in the evening and caused, as Plenipotentiary Maisky reported to Moscow, "the greatest excitement in political and government circles" ...

"The feelings were different —surprise, confusion, irritation, fear, " Maisky wrote, " This morning (on the 22nd—S.K.) the mood was close to panic... Lloyd George is in a good mood: he finds that the Soviet government has shown even too much patience in negotiations with England and France. He was waiting for our strike earlier ... "

On the 22nd, Marshal Voroshilov had a conversation with the head of the French military mission by General Dumenok and told him directly:

- Eleven days have passed, and all our work during this time has been reduced to marking time ... The position of Poland, Romania, England unknown...

"I agree with you," was all the Frenchman could say in response. And he repeated this over and over again, pouring essentially from empty into

empty...

But the general tried in vain ... In a day he will start packing his bags, like his unsuccessful colleague Admiral Drax. On August 22, French

Ambassador to the USSR Najjar sent a telegram to Foreign Minister Bonnet, at the beginning of which he said: ***“The Gavas Agency received permission from the Soviet press***

services publish the following:

“Negotiations on a non-aggression pact with Germany cannot in any way interrupt or slow down the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations. We are talking about promoting the cause of peace: one is aimed at reducing international tension, the other at preparing ways and means to combat aggression, if it occurs.

I recommend commenting, if not exactly in these terms, then at least in a similar spirit and with the greatest calmness ...” However, there was no longer any talk of calmness ...

What could remove
tension? And who could take it down? Two

events could remove the tension... The first would
solve the issue radically and would provide Europe with a lasting peace. This would happen if Poland agreed to the inclusion of Danzig in Germany and agreed to, at a minimum, extraterritorial communications through the Corridor. Although, it should be noted, it would be more honest to hold a referendum inside the “Corridor” on the question of whether its population itself wants to be part of Poland or the Reich (Hitler offered this option as well). And in Silesia and Poznań, such a referendum would not be out of place, and fair. After all, thanks to Versailles, one and a half million people lived in “German” Poland.

The second, although less cardinal, but also a stabilizing event could be the loudly declared readiness of Poland in the event of an invasion by Hitler to immediately and unconditionally accept Soviet military assistance within the framework of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet agreement, the conclusion of which was actually blocked by the position of London (read - Washington), and formally - just the position of Warsaw (also, however, read - Washington) ...

Hitler was determined to solve the "Polish" question by force before the autumn of 1939, and he was right. The Wehrmacht was ready, he too, Europe was in ideological confusion, and it would be simply stupid for Germany to "pull the rubber" until 1940 or even longer.

But if Poland was reoriented to the guarantees of the USSR, Hitler would, in the event of an attack on Poland, no longer face the insidious French, promising a lot and often betraying, not leaders like Daladier, Bonnet and other political trash, but a power that does not throw words into the wind, and with a leader, bigger and more decisive than him - the Fuhrer, himself ... And here one would have to think ...

The Fuhrer would have

thought ... That is, to the second question about who could relieve tension and save the situation, there was only one answer - the Poles. But it was an answer without a real base. The Poles in power themselves led Poland to slaughter the golden dollar calf, which, unlike its brothers in blood and flesh, never became the object of sacrifices, but always their subject ... The French, although Nadzhir

called for calm, of course, were worried in Unlike London and Warsaw (in both cases, read, I repeat, Washington) they would like to avoid war. There was no time for subterfuge, for Paris the moment of truth came, and it was necessary to look the situation in the eye and at least tell the truth to ourselves. Therefore, Bonnet, the same capacious for the events of August 22, sent a completely honest telegram to the ambassador in Warsaw, Noel : ***Smigly in order to eliminate, while there is still time, the only obstacle,***

which at the same time hinders the conclusion of tripartite agreements in

Moscow. The only possible response to the Russian-German treaty would be the immediate granting by the Polish government of at least a tacit (is it for the garrulous, if they need it, the Polish lords? - S. K.), ***the right to sign, allowing General Dumenok to take on behalf of Poland a firm***

position, bearing in mind the unique eventuality of a war in which Russia would be the last to come to the

rescue ... Deign to especially insist on this, emphasizing in the most decisive way that Poland, neither morally nor politically, can refuse to experience this last chance to save the world ... "

But Poland did not seek to save the world - it had already taken Berlin in newspaper articles ... And Berlin knew this ... Therefore, on a busy day on August 22 at 12.00 CET in the high mountain region of Obersalzberg, not far from the Bavarian town of Berchtesgaden, in the Fuhrer's chalet, a meeting of commanders of army groups and armies from all three branches of the armed

forces. - Lord! I called you together to give a picture of the political situation and get your support... A clash with Poland is inevitable! It would have been better to eliminate the threat in the West first, and then go to the East, but it is becoming more and more clear that Poland, in any difficult situation, will stab us in the back. At the same time, one can not be afraid of a strike from the West, England and France are not ready ... England will strive for military complications not earlier than in 3 years .. The generals and admirals

listened to the Fuhrer in complete silence - as always, but this time - especially carefully and intensely. After all, the war was already on the nose. Hitler continued:

- We are also favored by two circumstances of personal significance: my personality and the personality of Mussolini. In view of my political abilities, much depends on my existence. After all, it is a fact that people do not trust anyone like me, and it is unlikely that someone else will appear in the future, the same. But I can be destroyed at any moment as a result of an assassination attempt ... An

involuntary conversation swept through the hall ... - The second factor is the Duce. If something happened to him, Italy's allied allegiance could no longer be secure... Therefore, let it all happen now - before there was a major clash with the West. We must test the instrument of war! The generals were again very attentive ...

And Hitler spoke again about Poland:

Relations between Germany and Poland have become unbearable. Proposals regarding Danzig and the railway through the "Corridor" were rejected by Poland at the insistence of England ... The resolution of the "Polish" issue cannot be transferred to third parties. Time favors his decision right now.

The Fuhrer's listeners already knew about the news from Moscow and outwardly patiently, but with great inner impatience, were waiting for the Fuhrer to tell them about

it ... - Now about Russia ... She will never rush headlong to fight for France and England. The removal of Litvinov marked the end of the interventionist policy... And our trade agreement paved the way for the pact. Thus, I knocked their weapons out of the hands of the Western masters. Hitler

interrupted his speech, looked around those present with a searching look, and spoke again: "It is

still impossible to foresee the consequences. Apparently, a new course is possible... Stalin writes that this course promises great benefits to both sides... Well, a gigantic turn in all European politics is possible... THIS IS THE WAY Berlin

was set up... And on the same

day, August 22, the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain sent a message to Hitler. Its meaning was unequivocal - if Hitler thinks that after the announced signing of the Soviet-German treaty, Great Britain can be ignored, then he is grossly mistaken. **"Whatever the substance of the Soviet-German treaty may be,"** Chamberlain warned, **"it cannot change the obligation of Great Britain towards Poland, which His Majesty's Government has repeatedly and clearly stated and which it intends to fulfill."**

The Anglo-Saxon threatened war, offered to mediate in the negotiations, and at the end expressed the hope that **"Your Excellency (that is, Hitler. - S.K.) will weigh with the greatest attention my ... considerations."**

But everything had already been weighed, counted and measured... The requirements - quite legitimate - Germany to Poland had been known for a long time. And just as long ago, the Poles behaved impudently, denying the obvious. They so ignored reality and so irresponsibly "set up

who gave them guarantees from England and France, so provocatively refused Soviet guarantees that England had every right to refuse its guarantees. After all, during the period to which the

message of the British Prime Minister referred, Polish anti-aircraft batteries fired at peaceful Lufthansa aircraft! And if Chamberlain, instead of sending a message to

Berlin, sent a corresponding message to Warsaw, then one could hope that the "arrogant" politicians, left alone, would back down. And their conflict with the Reich will be resolved without a war. An, no! Chamberlain did not want a war, but he could not prevent it in the most natural way - by refusing to

threaten Germany ... The Golden International Zlit needed a war, and Chamberlain exhausted himself, although he himself was the largest arms industrialist ...

They were already preparing to bring Winston Churchill to the helm of the English Isle, and the "democratic" press was already preparing printing ink for praises to him and curses to the "Teutons" ...

But Hitler also exhausted himself - that year - for the Golden Elite ... A sad and funny detail ... In the spring of 1939, Uncle Sam clearly showed his "hoof" in the European situation. On April 14, President Roosevelt sent a personal message to Mussolini and Hitler with the following basic question: **"Are you ready to guarantee that your armed forces will not attack or seize the territories or possessions of the following independent nations ..."** And then thirty countries were listed in Europe and outside it. Roosevelt proposed that Germany and Italy make declarations of non-aggression against all countries on his list for a period of 10 to 25 years and

harmonize with them.

In their "concern" about the world, Roosevelt and his speechwriters lost sight of the fact that **a nation** is always independent, because independence is not an opportunity to famously twist a Uhlan mustache or pump up on Pilsen beer, but the ability to independently determine one's own destiny in spite of any external influences. Those who cannot provide this for themselves are not a nation.

But this is so, by the way. The main thing here was the impudence with which the Golden Elite, through the mouth of Roosevelt, arbitrarily "taught to live" two

really sovereign nations - German and Italian ... At the same time, he casually insulted another three dozen independent and ... not very independent, but still legally sovereign peoples.

In an address to the Reichstag on April 28, Hitler caustically stated:

"I took the trouble to ask the states in question - do they feel threatened, and did Mr. Roosevelt make his statement at their request, or at least with their consent?" The answer was negative, and in some cases sounded like an emphatic rebuttal. This is how the Fuhrer answered Roosevelt... Yes, although he

actively cooperated with the Golden Elite, including even its purely Jewish part, at the time of coming to power, although he was the leader of a country where US capital had strong positions, he is for the Golden Elite as a possible lever of himself exhausted ... And instead of agreeing with the West and not just like that, but at the expense of Russia, he preferred to negotiate with Russia. And London really tempted him - from May to August 1939,

that is, just when London was tempting Moscow against him.

The contacts of spring and summer (sometimes they were in the nature of negotiations) began at the initiative of England and were conducted by a whole company of variable composition, which from the British side included Chamberlain, Chamberlain's adviser-Wilson, Foreign Minister Halifax, his permanent deputy Vansittart, Foreign Trade Minister Hudson, the representative of the Conservatives, Ball, the representative of the Labor Party, the parliamentary adviser of the Buxton party, the parliamentary deputy of Halifax - Butler, the officer of the command of the Royal Air Force Ropp, and from the German - Ambassador Dirksen, the adviser to the embassy Theodor Cordt, the Reich official for special assignments, Ministerial Director Helmut Wohltat and some others.

The mediators were the Swedish industrialist Birger Dahlerus, the High Commissioner of the League of Nations in Danzig, the Swiss Karl Burckhardt, the aristocrats Trott zu Soltz and Prince Hohenlohe ...

This latter was a note intermediary for a couple with his wife, Princess Hohenlohe, and these two pairs of eyes clearly personified the only all- **seeing** eye with which elite Freemasonry looked at the world. And it wasn't just the conjugal eyes that helped **this** eye follow the negotiations .

Let's take a closer look at these negotiations and we ... GERMANY by that time was economically the second power in the world, and this already made its main antagonist not England, but the United States - the first world power. And this simple fact programmed both the expediency of the Anglo-German negotiations and their deliberate failure - just as it was with the Dusseldorf agreement ...

It all started something like this ...

Already after Hitler entered the Czech Republic, after London issued guarantees to Poland, on May 14, 1939, a prominent conservative Henry Drummond-Wolf met in Berlin with Ruther, head of the referentry for Great Britain of the economic policy department of the ausamt (Foreign Ministry) of Germany, Ruther and dumbfounded him:

- The political combinations that Great Britain is now making do not exclude the readiness to provide Germany with the field of economic activity that belongs to it by right throughout the world ... - In everything? — Well, in

particular in the

East and the Balkans... — And what about the guarantees you gave to a well-known country? - Not all at once, dear Herr Ruther, but I must say that our attitude towards you has not changed after Munich ... We are even ready to give you a large loan ...

So "a" was said. That part of the British elite, which was aware of the fatality for the British Empire of an alliance with the United States ("alliance" of a master and a trusted servant), which gives the empire a war, tried to ensure an alliance with Germany, which gives her peace.

But what is fatal! That part of the English elite, which recognized itself not as English, but as **Anglo-Saxons**, and even not so much Anglo-Saxons as **citizens of the world**, and not just the world, but the world where **the Golden International remains the master of life and the planet**, this part of the English Island elite was **also** interested in Anglo-German negotiations, but with the exact opposite goal - to lead Europe to war ...

To war in Europe in the name of the interests of the new headquarters Golden International - USA.

And the ambiguous "shuttle" semi-, non- and official diplomacy began ...

On June 8, Chamberlain receives the aristocrat Adam von Trott zu Solz, who had previously spoken with Lord Halifax, Lord Lothian and some others ... We must dwell on the figure of

this negotiator
separately...

Thirty-seven-year-old Adam Werner Troy zu Solz, the son of the former Prussian Minister of Education, belonged to the natural German aristocracy. However, I would be careful not to call him a German (like Winston Churchill an Englishman). Adam had an American grandmother who was the great granddaughter of John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States—which in itself earned him the honorary leather apron of a "freemason" brother. The great-great-great-grandson of one of the "founding fathers" of the United States studied at the universities of Munich, Göttingen and Berlin, and then received a Ross scholarship at Balliol College, Oxford.

Since 1934 Trott has been a practicing lawyer in Kassel. But in 1937 he leaves for the USA and, on assignment from the American Institute of Pacific Research, "travels" around China. Suddenly, in 1939, he returns to Europe, but not to his homeland, but to ... England.

And here he is - seemingly far from politics, and even more so from current and delicate politics, having no authority from Berlin - he suddenly joins politics! And how - at the highest level! First, he meets with old acquaintances - the Astor family and Lord Lothian, and then with Lord Halifax ..

In a memorandum filed later in the Aussamt, Trope stated: **"Lord Lothian and his friends are indeed ready to concede to Germany in the question of a protectorate over Eastern Europe and give her a free hand economically in Eastern Europe."** Under the patronage of the Astors, who had access to the

prime minister at any time, Trott was also received by Chamberlain. He told Trop that "the only solution to the European problem is possible only along the Berlin-London line," that he was ready to continue the policy of Munich and sacrifice negotiations with the USSR. After that, Troy goes to Berlin and submits his

memorandum.

The hook was thrown even more deftly than Drummond by Wolf ... But who was holding the bait in his hands?

Looking ahead, I will inform you that in September 1939, the perfectly physically developed von Trope, a German of "ripe" draft age, again leaves for the USA "at the invitation of the Institute of Pacific Studies" and calls to counteract Nazism.

A brilliant cosmopolitan with a piercing gaze and early large receding hairline, a convinced elitist, he returned to Germany in 1940 through Siberia with goals that were quite definite and hardly conceived by him. The fact is that von Trope was very friendly with the two senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Kordt brothers (however, he generally had huge connections in Berlin). They also participated in the contacts of 1939, and with their help, Adam himself entered the service in ausamt, planning the

overthrow of Hitler ... Von Trope's participation in the early Anglo-German contacts of this whole story, of course, a "significant" moment ...

One way or another, now the thread has been pulled from Berlin to London. On June 10-14, Prince Hohenlohe is visiting London, talking with Vansittart, Lord Astor, Duke of Kent, Foreign Office adviser Frank Ashton-Guekin ... He also had especially intimate contacts with industrialists. And in June, Wohltath

comes to London for talks with Chamberlain's "gray eminence" Horace Wilson and Minister Hudson. And on June 29, Halifax, in a public speech, expresses his readiness to come to an agreement with Germany on issues that "inspire alarm in the world" ... - In the new situation,

we could discuss the colonial problem, the question of raw materials, trade barriers, "living space", the limitation of armaments and much more other things that affect the Europeans, said Chief Foreign Office. The hints were transparent, and in a confidential

setting, everything was called by its proper name. During the already August meetings of Dahlerus with Goering, the Germans were offered a conference in Sweden on the conditions that "Germany will receive everything it wants from Poland" ...

Even earlier, during the second, July, visit of Wohltath to London, he was offered the concept of joint cooperation in three regions of the world - the British Empire, China and ... Russia.

Yes, Russia....

The bait on the hook was good! But
it's bait! And this was

during Strang's ongoing negotiations in Moscow, who prepared the
ground for the already military Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations.

Even Ribbentrop's personal secretary, the minister's bureau chief,
Erich Kordt, told his English colleague, Assistant Deputy Foreign Minister
Sargent: "All the efforts of the British government to
reach an agreement with Germany by speeches or other channels will
not have the slightest hope of success until they are One way or another,
the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations are over.

By the way... Von Trott's acquaintances, the brothers Erich and
Theodor Kordt, would be quite satisfied if these tripartite negotiations were
crowned with success, and were horrified at the thought of the emergence
of a German-Soviet agreement... And

these "patriotic" cosmopolitans were not just horrified about
themselves, but acted. The "Londoner" Theodor, receiving information from
the "Berliner" Erich, confidentially informed his English friends that Hitler
intended to bypass them in Moscow. The

brothers were told that the British government would never give Hitler
a chance to get ahead of themselves. At the same time, the British kept
repeating about the need to reach an agreement between the two "leading white races".

It would seem, what more? Britain is ready to give up guarantees to
Poland and give Germany everything she wants in Poland. France in this
case would only have to follow the example of England, referring to the
precedent. Without war, Hitler gets Danzig and so on, free hands, access
to the colonies, raw materials, a loan ... The British

ambassador in Berlin, Henderson, just did not roll his eyes, repeating
over and over again: -

I dream at least once to see how the Fuhrer of Germany and Herman
Goering are going to Buckingham Palace to pay a visit to the

king ... However, Henderson said this, it seems,

sincerely. In the meantime, Goering was offered to pay a secret visit
to Chamberlain. Field Marshal and Nazi Aircraft No. 2 was supposed to

land at a secluded airfield in Hertfordshire, from where the guest would be transported to Checkers, the Prime Minister's country residence.

It was good bait! But

sometimes it broke down ... On August 11, Hitler, in the presence of Gauleiter Danzig Albrecht Forster, received Karl Burckhardt. The Swiss hosted a reception the day before in honor of the departing Tadeusz Perkowski, deputy head of the Polish diplomatic mission in the "Republic of Danzig." On the part of the Swiss Commissioner of the League of Nations, this was already a very definite and provocative demonstration.

Hitler invited Burckhardt to Berchtesgaden. Or maybe Burckhardt asked for a visit himself - the story is dark here ...

Later, the Swiss distorted the course of the meeting, but the fact is that after a conversation with the Fuhrer, he moved from Germany not to "hot" Danzig, but to quiet Basel, and on August 13 to emissaries came to him: from the Foreign Office - Maykins, and from

the Quai d'Orsay - Arnal. Commissar Burckhardt informed, emissaries wrote down, and then Arnal was informed - "Paris Soir" gave a message that the Fuhrer, through Burckhardt, had sent Chamberlain a personal message proposing a joint crusade against Russia ...

Evening "Paris Soir" was still "that" newspaper, and if the reader remembers the assessment of the French press by the Parisian Alphan, then it was fully applicable to this printed organ. The

essence of the fake was seen clearer than clear - things were going to German-Soviet rapprochement, and this had to be prevented.

But it is unlikely that anyone reasonable believed the typical "duck" ... On the contrary, our plenipotentiary in Paris, Yakov Surits, telegraphed to Moscow: "Now ***Burckhardt's mission is in the spotlight, since everyone who knows him excludes the possibility that he could undertake his trip without the knowledge and consent London and Paris***

YES, A LOT, a lot was intertwined in these two weeks before August 23 ... A week before this "German-Soviet" date - on August 16, his old acquaintance, Baron de Ropp from the British Ministry of Aviation, "looked at" Alfred Rosenberg, head of the NSDAP foreign policy service. Baron de Ropp has just returned from

southern France, was in Corsica, and made no secret of the fact that his visit was not a tribute to a long-standing

acquaintance, and probing ...

"The General Staff of the British Air Force and the Air Ministry consider it nonsense that England and Germany should be plunged into a life-and-death struggle over Poland..." De Ropp said at once.

"I don't argue, Baron," agreed Rosenberg. "My friends and I have studied Germany and the National Socialist movement in detail, and we do not believe that you are thinking of defeating England or France. On the contrary, we know that the Führer and your movement respect the British Empire as a whole..."

- Again, I do not argue,
Baron ... - However, - de Ropp sighed, - if the war starts, England and France will automatically follow.

-
ABOUT? - Yes! But it is important not to let the conflict turn into mutual destruction ... If Germany quickly puts an end to Poland, then the war can be eliminated. After all, because of a state that would already cease to exist in its original form, neither the British Empire nor Germany would put their own existence at stake. "I have just returned from vacation, Baron, and do

not have complete information, but I take note of what you said. - If England puts pressure on the Poles, will they become more prudent? - The Poles are deliberately provoking the Reich, and you too ... As I understand it, with their provocations they want to force us to take some step and get your automatic support by virtue of guarantees. But what if you put pressure on them? - Ah, here you need to know their character ... Sometimes they simply lose their restraint and the ability to think soberly ... - What can be done here? Could you give me

a compilation of documents about the mistreatment of Germans in Poland? - I'll give instructions to prepare for tomorrow morning ... - Thank you! I will stay in Germany for another 8-10 days ... Rosenberg immediately handed over the recording of the conversation to Hitler. Well, de Ropp clearly belonged to the nationally minded part of the English elite, but it was not he who determined the state of affairs, but the Churchills and the Edens ... What is there

Baron de Ropp! More serious ones were doomed to failure.

contacts...

Swedish industrialist Birger Dahlerus was a manufacturer of bearings and a supplier of military materials. In the military circles of the Reich, he had long and good acquaintances, especially in the Luftwaffe, which largely depended on his supplies.

On August 7, a capacious limousine flying the Swedish flag raced from the not very close Hamburg to the villa in the estate of Dahlerus's wife "Senke Nissen Hog" in Schleswig-Holstein near the Danish border.

Guests were coming to Dalerus to meet another guest of the Senke Nissen Hog...

The passengers of the car arrived in Hamburg separately, but knew each other quite well due to business ties.

Director of John Brown & Co. and Associated Electrical Industries, Charles Spencer. Director of John Brown

& Co. Stanley W. Rawson. Director of Crevens Railway Carriage Company Holden. Director of the insurance company "General Banner of Eagle Air" Brian Mountain. Robert Renwick,

Governor and Deputy Chairman of County of London Electric Sunlay. Chairman and CEO of Allied Bakers and

Weston Biscuit Harold Weston.

Plus the seventh unmarked member of society, presumably - translator.

These people were not from the highest strata of English business, but perhaps that is precisely why they - quite respectable people - really represented the business world of England, and not "in England".

Spencer, along with Holden and Rawson, also headed the Danzig firm of International Shipbuilding Engineering, and in this case, the entire company of English industrialists. And these representatives of business circles believed that Germany could get less through war than through negotiations.

Having reached the villa at 10 am, the guests from the Island stretched their legs and went into the house, where the owner, having met them, invited the already waiting ninth

participant: - Please, field marshal!

And Hermann Goering walked into the living room in an ordinary gray suit ...
The meeting seemed to be private. But ... But
the president of the Anglo-Swedish Society, Werner, brought Dahlerus together, her
initiator, with Lord Halifax.

And the head of the Foreign Office blessed the idea of a new contact,
requiring only that correspondence go through Werner.

However, maybe it was Halifax (or Chamberlain) who went through Werner
to Dahlerus ... After all, Dahlerus was a direct and unofficial way out at least to
Goering, and there ...

After all, this is such a thing - it's not fixed on paper ...

One way or another, but nine people settled down in armchairs for a calm
conversation, which, with a break at the "buffet" (where, although they ate, they
were also not silent) dragged on until half past six in the evening. Goering was

immediately asked the question: - What

led to a change in the Fuhrer's views after Munich? Why was he so harsh
towards England and her premiere in his speech on October 9, 1938 in
Saarbrücken? "The Führer did not attack Mr.

Chamberlain there," Goering objected. "He only attacked those who
opposed him. The speeches of Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Eden and Mr. Duff-
Cooper show that they prefer war to settlement. We see that Mr. Chamberlain's
position is unstable.

Those listening to him squirmed in their chairs, although soft masterpieces
furniture art were convenience itself, as Goering explained:

- The cabinet, which has Churchill, Eden and Duff Cooper in its
composition, will probably gain the upper hand, and the course of this cabinet
would be directed to

war ... Goering glanced at those present and said: -

Gentlemen! I have made a historical overview of current issues and
propose an exchange of views on the whole complex of relations between
Great Britain and Germany without restrictions ... The current situation is fraught
with the constant threat of war, and the thought that bloodshed could begin is
terrible for me. The ideas of the Fuhrer in Mein Kampf are focused on mutual
understanding with Great Britain as one of the basic principles of foreign

Germany's policy... But does the UK have any good will? I would like to note that we are trying to solve our problems at the negotiating table with a pen, but the British Empire was created not with a pen, but with a sword! The chairs began to fidget again, but Goering

did not stray from the line: "Munich was a success, but after it

Great Britain avoided discussing with us the colonial problem, the problems of Czechoslovakia and our own. And after Munich, the Czechs pursued a strange policy, blocked the Slovaks, and all this led to our entry into Prague ... As for Poland, after Munich, she benefited from us in Czechoslovakia and got Teshin. However, the next logical step would be to solve the Danzig problem. And it would have been real, but British intervention made

Poles are tough.

- The Poles themselves ... - Spencer tried to object, but Goering interrupted him: - We in Germany

were surprised by the fact that Great Britain at first considered it possible to talk about the frivolity of the Poles, and after a few months started talking about them as a "proud and courageous people" ...

Goering paused and said warningly: "We, too, will be tougher in our demands from now on..." "But Germany may be isolated," Spencer objected cautiously. - What do you have in mind? "Triple negotiations are

underway in Moscow, and

they, Mr. Field Marshal, can give results. - ABOUT! Goering laughed frankly.

- In Moscow, the British negotiators were

treated not in the best way. But among them there is not a single truly authoritative military figure. No, there will be no concrete results ... And

Then...

- What "later"?.. -

Later, - Goering pursed his lips a little, - then, the doors for negotiations with Russia are still open for Germany itself. The Treaty of Rapallo is still in force, and it should be remembered that Germany still has many friends in Russia...

The situation, if not tense, then became delicate, and Dahlerus imperceptibly blinked an eyebrow and said:

"Gentlemen! Isn't it time for us to refresh ourselves? After a light breakfast, Dahlerus

suggested, "Perhaps it would be worthwhile to consider general possibilities for reaching an understanding between Great Britain and Germany.

"Perhaps it's time," Goering agreed. - And I want to point out the following right away ... If Great Britain begins to pursue a purely British policy in the future, then an agreement with Germany is possible - if, of course, it will be beneficial to both parties. Our

immediate problem is that today the population of the Reich is 82 million Germans and 7 million Czechs. In good years we have enough food, in lean years we can get what we lack either from the colonies or by import, for which we need an expanded export trade.

Here all the British and Dalerus himself nodded in unison and understanding ... - The colonial claims of Germany are the need for a territory on which oilseeds can be grown for our needs.

"Perhaps this will affect spheres of British influence," Spencer remarked thoughtfully ... "Most

likely, but ..." Goering replied. "Well, this is quite natural," Dalerus threw conciliatorily ... And the others also nodded in

agreement ... "However, the current problems are more important," the German reminded, "and I emphasize: it is important that Germany regain Danzig ... I swear on the honor of the officer and gentleman that this is Germany's last territorial claim in Europe.

It was hardly possible to recognize the field marshal here as sincere - given the fact that Hitler set himself up and those around him for a long war in the form of at least "Middle Europe". But it is hardly necessary to evaluate Goering's oaths as deliberately false. After all, he remarked very well that peace is possible if Great Britain begins to pursue a purely **British** policy.

And such a policy without war would give priority to Germany's political and economic leadership in Europe. After all, even without colonies, it became the second industrial power in the world!

In such a Europe, the Poles would not even dare to think about the "sign" castration of a German, because they would quickly be "castrated" themselves to the same Poznan and Silesia

- at least. However, was the real Britain then capable of acting in the interests of

Britain? Goering asked three direct questions, beginning like this: "If Mr. Chamberlain proposed negotiations to Germany today, would this move not lead to his downfall?" "Unfortunately, the situation is such that the press can present everything to the public in such a light that after this the cabinet will fall," Spencer

sighed. - And if we turn to him with such an offer, will he accept it?
-

Probably, yes... -

And if a conference is convened to clarify our bilateral problems, taking into account the interests of Italy and France, will Mr. Chamberlain agree to participate in it without Poland? Spencer, exchanging glances with his colleagues, admitted: - We cannot answer this question ... What did it turn out to be? By extending the hand of peaceful partnership to Germany on his own initiative, Chamberlain got holes from the reefs of the press and went to the bottom.

Taking the hand of Germany, he ... Oh, yes, it is clear that he was drowning on the same reefs. Elite Britain was no longer capable of pursuing a purely British

policy ... Spencer's REPORT about the "private" conversation was immediately put on the table not even by Halifax, but by Chamberlain himself. So the actual level of this contact was essentially the highest. And the impulse

came from Great Britain... And now, my dear reader, let's think... It would seem that the initiator of this whole process is London, not Berlin. So it's just a matter of Berlin's consent? But why does the Fuhrer not agree? Is he a fool, a "maniac"? Later there was a wandering anecdote started by Hjalmar

Mine that after returning from Munich, the Fuhrer allegedly declared in anger at Chamberlain: "This guy thwarted my victorious entry into Prague" ... But there was hardly more truth in this anecdote than in any other. So Leopold Emery put into the

mouth of the Fuhrer such an emotional assessment relating to August 22, 39: "Daladier and Chamberlain are miserable worms, I recognized them in Munich. They are too cowardly to attack us. The most they can decide on is a blockade." However, there is also a more restrained version of this passage: "Our opponents are small worms. I saw them in Munich."

And the same idea was expressed in a completely different way by General Halder after the meeting of the generals on August 14, where the current situation was also discussed. Halder wrote in his diary: "The Munich leaders will not take the risk of starting a war. Global Risk! However, the

essence of the thought did not change from this - if there is power, then the "democratic" public should not be particularly considered. The idea, by the way, is very clever. But the Fuhrer himself emphasized more than once before the generals that the risk was great for Germany, but it was worth the risk.

Hitler was a sober and realistic politician and fully saw the rationality of partnership relations with England, but on the principle of the latter's recognition of the obvious: only Germany could be the leader of Europe in the future. She is the right for-ra-bo-ta-la in the truest sense of the word - the work of her people. And if all the steps

taken by the British side in the summer of 1939 had been sincere, then Hitler's steps would hardly have been what they were. But there was just no sincerity, because the German-English dialogue had, although carefully hidden, but undeniable "double" bottom - call it what you want: elitist-cosmopolitan, masonic, supranational, globalist...

How could London convince Berlin of its really bona fide (good intentions)? Only by

completely depriving Poland of its political support and publicly recognizing Germany's rights to Danzig and so on ... Horace Wilson said in London to Theodor Kordt: "It would be the greatest stupidity if the two leading white races exterminated each other in

war, only Bolshevism would benefit from it. Let us leave to Sir Horace's conscience (if he had one) the assertion about Bolshevism. But the fact that neither the German people nor the English would have benefited from the war was beyond doubt ...

However, all this was said behind the scenes... And in public, the British were calm about the fact that the Poles were beginning to take economic measures against Danzig, and were streaking with threats. The German minority in Poland had even worse - a lot of noise (in the Polish press) was caused by the case of the castration of a young German by the Poles! But more

than that - on August 4, the Poles presented an ultimatum to Germany! Ultimatum!

In response,

Germany sent troops to Danzig on August 6, and Polish customs officers on the border of Danzig with East Prussia were asked to cease their duties. The crisis deepened. Gauleiter Danzig Foerster

went to the Fuhrer in Berchtesgaden for instructions. England, on the other hand, played at public "neutrality", provoking and Poles, and Germans, and

Russians. Of course there were sober Englishmen in England who wanted British politics to be British. For example, the same "Spencer's seven". But they were in the minority among the active (important!) part of the elite. And the press was not on their side at all ...

As for the cosmopolitan part of the elite, the scheme of its actions was simple and vile. Through negotiations in Moscow, the supranational part of the British elite wanted to tear Russia away from a possible union with Germany, and through negotiations in London, to tear Germany away from a possible union with Russia ...

Moscow and Berlin were already engaged in an active dialogue, but in the USSR there were still enough who did not contribute ... So, referring to Strang's political - not military - negotiations in Moscow, our plenipotentiary in Paris, Surits, wrote on July 25 to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs:

"The correctness of our position in the negotiations became especially clear to everyone in the light of the Hudson-Wolthat negotiations and the surrendering Anglo-Japanese agreement ... Any honest supporter of an agreement with us asks himself what trust Moscow

may have to negotiators when at the moment of negotiations a bridge is being built to an agreement with Germany, and during a military conflict between the USSR and Japan shameful advances are made to Japan. It

is indicative that Erich Kordt, in fact, spoke about the same thing on July 6 in London to Sargent. And in general, Surits could have noticed that at that time there could have been ***honest*** supporters of an agreement with us in France (and not ***just*** supporters), if an agreement with France did not correspond to our interests.

If the Anglo-French did not want war, they should not have sought support from the USSR against Germany (again, like thirty years ago, playing off the Russians and Germans), but withdraw their guarantees to Poland and accept the German settlement plan. Without

doing this, the leadership of the "democracies" led their countries to war, and at the same time self-servingly intended to "weave" into this swara and U.S...

Where is ***the honesty***

here? But Surits was a Litvinian cadre, and already condemning a specific line of crafty Western negotiators, he was still inclined to agree with them on an "honest" basis ... Well, yes ... But there

was another aspect - taking into account the difficult August hostilities in Mongolia and the general situation in the Far East is also important ... Molotov was warned about it on August 12 by Astakhov, Charge d'Affaires of the USSR:

"The prospect of Japan's joining the Italo-German pact remains in Berlin's reserve in the event of our agreement with Britain and France."

That is, the

persistence of hostility with Germany, which did not yet agree to enter into an anti-Soviet alliance with Tokyo, would automatically exacerbate another problem for us. However,

Moscow has almost got rid of this muddled Litvin legacy. And Molotov, as we remember, was increasingly visited by the Moscow ambassador of the Reich, Count Friedrich Werner von der Schulenburg. Stalin agreed to ensure peace for

Russia and Germany ... The British, like Spencer, seemed to offer Germany the same

- peace instead of

war. But if in the case of the Soviet Union, Hitler knew that what was proposed by the Russians, with his consent, would be publicly, honestly and firmly fixed at the highest state level, then the British "grimaced", limiting themselves to detective contacts like a meeting at the Dalerus villa ... And how was

he supposed to decide and act Fuhrer? Again try to negotiate with Poland? But after all, the Fuhrer could not count on the minimum long-term loyalty of Poland (led by Washington even more harshly than England).

England offered Germany a very appetizing piece of cheese. It wasn't free, but it was still in a mousetrap. He lay even in the case when he seemed to be offered sincerely - like circles grouped around Spencer.

Hitler was, after all, a wolf, and the party pseudonym had a corresponding one. And the seasoned wolf does not go into traps ...

Yes, there was a double "bottom" in English politics, alas... And its presence programmed the war. But Stalin's policy managed to change that part of the program that oriented Hitler towards enmity with the USSR and reprogrammed the situation "exactly the opposite" ...

THIS WAS important also because in our Far East at any moment a serious, big war could then begin ! Having begun in the Mongolian steppes, it could continue in the "wild" steppes of Transbaikalia, "where gold is washed in the mountains", in the glorified Arseniev Primorye, near the "high banks of the Amur" ... in the Far

East, aerial bombardments of Khabarovsk and naval shelling from the sea of Vladivostok were - in the event of an unsuccessful development of events for us at Khalkhin Gol - very likely ... A military alliance with the "democracies" provoked a new enmity between the USSR and the Reich, but it would also irritate

Japan ... Already one vague prospect of sending some kind of Anglo-French naval forces to help the Soviet Far East could push Tokyo to increase the scale of the conflict and expand its geographical borders ...

On the other hand, as Astakhov accurately caught, in the event of our agreement with England and France, Berlin could agree to Japan's inclusion in the Italo-German "Steel Pact" on Japanese terms, that is, with giving the "Steel Pact" that anti-Soviet character, which for Berlin was before

unwanted.

On the contrary, the pact with the Germans sobered up the Japanese and, in the long run, created a reserve of opportunities for improving relations with Japan, both through our own efforts and with the help of the Germans and... And - Italians...

Stalin, through Sorge, knew that the Japanese would begin their offensive at Khalkhin Gol on August 20, and this was one of the reasons that Ambassador Schulenburg on August 19 at first had an "inconclusive" conversation with Molotov until 3 pm, and after half an hour, just having managed to return to the embassy, he was again invited to the Kremlin at 16.30.

And soon he returned to the embassy, but no longer dejected, but joyfully stunned ... Molotov finally received Stalin's "good". For Stalin, everything finally tied into one knot - the readiness of Berlin, Japanese activity, Anglo-French sabotage and the objective benefits of the partnership between Russia and Germany ...

For the German ambassador, the period was not "star" hours, but several "star" days - from the evening of Saturday, August 19 to the night of Wednesday, August 23rd to Thursday, August 24 ... At 18 hours

on August 21, when Ribbentrop's visit had already been decided, Schulenburg finished in the embassy a personal letter to Alla von Duberg in Berlin. He wrote: "I am ***now directly from the Kremlin. By the time you receive this letter, you will already know from the newspapers about a major success. This is a diplomatic miracle! Its consequences cannot be foreseen. My cryptographers hadn't slept for several nights, and I was a little tired too. And we have a few more days of high tension ahead of us. But now it does not matter, after the decision that we sought and desired was made. I hope that circumstances do not spoil what is now in perfect order. In any case, we have completed our task. We have achieved in three weeks what the British and French could not achieve in many months! If only something good came out of all this! ..*** "

BUT GENERALLY, the idea of a turn was circulating in Germany, as they say, in the air for a long time ... Goering spoke about this to Spencer and Dahlerus ... Hitler himself thought about this - surprised himself, presumably, at this thought, looking through the newsreel in the Reich Chancellery and admiring the simple majesty of Stalin, nodding friendly on the screen to the parade columns of the Moscow military parade.

Konstantin von

Neurath, who had been appointed Imperial Protector of Bohemia and Moravia five months earlier, spoke about this to Hitler on August 3, twenty days before Ribbentrop's arrival in Moscow. When the Fuhrer asked him what he thought about the agreement with Russia, the sixty-six-year-old Baron Neurath, the son of the chief equerry of the Württemberg royal court and himself at one time the chief chamberlain of this court, a graduate of the Thuringian and Berlin universities, a member of the NSDAP since 1937, an SS Gruppenfuehrer, replied, without hesitation: "My Fuhrer, I advised this a long time ago ..."

Hitler then doubted - but how will the party perceive this? But even in the party, many would have treated this with understanding, not to mention the Wehrmacht ...

As early as November 25, 1937, Schulenburg spoke to students of the military academy in Berlin. The young elite of the German army listened attentively to the Reich Ambassador in Moscow, and he, from a serious podium, in the fifth year of the existence of the National Socialist regime, said the following: -

Russia occupies the most important place in the Prussian-German history of the last two centuries ... Her position during the creation of a united Germany is very helped Bismarck in his great endeavours.

The hall did not show the slightest discontent, and Schulenburg continued:

- It is absurd to say that the Soviet Union poses a threat to Germany, on the contrary, sometimes our policy gives Russia grounds for alarm ... Russia strives for calm in international affairs. And only the aggressiveness of Germany can push the Soviets towards a bloc with England and France. Then War Minister von Blomberg approached the speaker and said that he and a number of his colleagues would like to have a copy of the report with them.

However, Blomberg was already the past of the Wehrmacht in 1939. But even at the beginning of June 1939, when, after a meeting with the generals on May 23, Hitler instructed Brauchitsch and Keitel to once again study the question "of the possibility, under the current conditions, of a favorable outcome for Germany in a total conflict," both replied that everything depended on non-participation or participation in the conflict with the Soviet Union. At the same time, the commander-in-chief of the ground forces, that is, Brauchitsch, answered for the case of non-participation of Russia: "Probably, the outcome will be favorable," and the chief of staff of the Supreme High Command of the Wehrmacht, that is, Keitel, answered unconditionally: "If Russia does not participate, yes!"

Such was the situation with the moods

"above"... And what could we say about ordinary Germans! Ten days before Ribbentrop's departure from Berlin to Moscow, on August 12, Georgy Aleksandrovich Astakhov, well known to the reader, wrote to Molotov : ***conflict, but it will also give Germany so much raw material that the raw material and food crises will be completely eliminated. We can feel this confidence in the re-establishment of Soviet-German friendship at every step in our conversations with shopkeepers, hairdressers and all kinds of representatives of various professions. The antipathy that the Poles have always enjoyed among the population, and the hidden sympathies that flickered towards us even during the most ferocious rampant anti-Soviet campaign, are now bearing fruit and are being used by the government in order to familiarize the population with the current foreign policy course.*** WE ALREADY know how the Soviet Union and Germany were moving towards the Pact...

Here's how they signed it...

A large company of 37 people flew to Moscow, including the Fuhrer's personal translator Paul Schmidt and the Fuhrer's personal photographer Heinrich Hoffmann.

Leaving the plane at one o'clock in the afternoon, Ribbentrop went from the airport to his residence during the Moscow visit - the building of the former Austrian embassy, and from there - to the German embassy on

conversation with Schulenburg. Soon there was a call from the Kremlin and they were told that they were expected at half past three.

Three people went to the Kremlin - Ribbentrop, the ambassador and adviser Hilger, who knew Russian like a native (which he was for the native of Moscow, Hilger). Entering

the oblong small hall (this was Molotov's office), Schulenburg could not restrain his surprised exclamation - Stalin was standing next to Molotov. Schulenburg had been ambassador to Moscow since October 1934, but had not seen Stalin before that.
never.

Having settled down at the table and exchanging courtesies, Ribbentrop, after Molotov's invitation, said: "Mr. Stalin!" Germany

would like to place German-Soviet relations on a new basis. We want to reach an agreement with Russia for the longest possible time on the basis of the most friendly relations. As we understood from your spring speech, you would also like this... Stalin, after listening, turned to Molotov: - Who will answer, Comrade

Molotov? Maybe you yourself? - Comrade Stalin,
the first word by right is yours ... Stalin

nodded silently, looked directly at the guest from Berlin, and began:

- You understood me correctly, I deliberately delivered my speech on March 10, bearing in mind the desirability of our mutual understanding. Yes, even though we've been throwing mud at each other for years, that's no reason why we can't get along again. But such things are not so quickly forgotten. Therefore, we must be prudent and, moving towards truly friendly relations, we must be careful in formulating for the public opinion of our countries when we inform our peoples about the change that has taken place in Soviet-German relations.

Ribbentrop did not expect such frankness and frankness, and he involuntarily escaped: "Oh, yes!"

And

Stalin's tone immediately set the tone for the whole conversation - it was businesslike and concrete. The main thing was already clear - the pact would be signed and

you can immediately agree on close prospects, among which, first of all, the not excluded German-Polish conflict loomed ...

Neither Hitler, nor even Ribbentrop, expected such speed - the Russians had a reputation for stubborn diplomats. Who would have thought that in just an hour the conversation would be about the details of the problem of delimiting interests and spheres of influence. And Ribbentrop, although he had unlimited powers from the Fuhrer, stumbled on the issue of the ports of Liebau (Liepaja) and Windau (Ventspils) ...

"I would like to report this to the government," he asked. I had to announce a break, and Ribbentrop rushed to the embassy - to the telephone. A request went to Berlin, and the minister, who did not really have time to eat in Moscow, began a hasty dinner, exclaiming every now and then: "Stalin is a genius! This is an extraordinary man! And his way of speaking, that sober, dry style! And yet, what generosity! Things are going great with the Russians. By night we are all finish"...

And in BERLIN, Hitler was waiting for news from Moscow. At Keitel's Oberkommando der Wehrmacht and at Halder's Oberkommando des Heeres, meetings were in full swing, telephone handsets overheated from the tense breathing of adjutants and generals, the disposition and tasks of units and formations already prepared for strikes in the Reich and East Prussia were clarified, and already appeared in conversations. day Y" and "hour X"...

The mechanism of the war that had not yet begun was already in full swing, and Hitler could not completely surrender to his feelings, but he was especially

tense. He ordered his adjutant to request the embassy, but from Moscow they only reported that negotiations were underway, the Reich Minister

in the Kremlin ... After listening to the answer, he said thoughtfully: - Well, this agreement can be considered as a reasonable deal. Of course, one must be on the alert with Stalin, but a pact with him gives a chance to turn England off from the Polish conflict...

"My Fuhrer," the adjutant ventured to remark, "the conflict is still could escalate into a bloody war.

"If there is to be, then let it happen as soon as possible. The longer we wait, the more blood will be shed...

At this time, Hitler was called to the telephone - Ribbentrop turned to with a request for the Baltic ports.

"Map," the Fuhrer said curtly. They brought the card right away. Hitler looked at her, thought and ordered: - Send

it to Moscow, I agree ... Having received an answer and hastily finished the meal, Ribbentrop, taking, in addition to the ambassador and Hilger, also the head of the legal department, Dr. Gaus, and at the same time the personal photographer of the Fuhrer Heinrich Hoffmann, again rushed to the Kremlin.

It was about 10 pm ... And by midnight all the papers, including the pact itself, were signed. The cameras of the People's Commissariat photographer and Hoffmann, the first foreigner who received permission to shoot at this level, were clicking. Glasses of Crimean champagne appeared in the hands of the hosts and guests. Ribbentrop, who at one time

dealt with champagne himself, rated it as a connoisseur, and Hoffmann at that time caught a good shot - Stalin and Ribbentrop with glasses held out to each other. Stalin suddenly turned sharply and threw

something to our interpreter Pavlov. He, glowing with a slight blush, approached the Berlin guest and said:

- Comrade Stalin would not like the publication of this picture. Ribbentrop called Hoffmann:

"Heinrich, the film will have to be handed over..." Hoffmann, sighing, resignedly took the film out of the camera, gave it to the minister, who handed it over to Stalin. Stalin took it, held it in his hand, and gave it back to

Hoffmann: - I trust you ... But - without the right to publish! "Oh, jawohl," agreed Hoffmann gleefully. clicked off film photographers, papers were carried away and stacked in briefcases.

"And now I ask you to the table," Molotov invited. Everyone moved into the small Andreevsky Hall, where the table had already been set, and smart figures in white flashed quickly and accurately.

In addition to the Germans - Ribbentrop, Schulenburg and Gaus with Hilger Lazar Kaganovich sat down at the table together with Stalin and Molotov...

The table was led by Molotov, but the atmosphere of the feast was created by Stalin, standing up and saying:

- I propose to drink for the Reich Chancellor of Germany, Mr. Adolf Hitler. He is loved by the German people, and we see in him a person who deserves respect! I hope that the treaties now signed by you, Herr Ribbentrop and Comrade Molotov, are laying the foundation for a new phase in German-Soviet relations... For that! And then toast followed toast. Ribbentrop, who was sitting next to Stalin, raised

his glass to Stalin and Molotov, Molotov to Ribbentrop and Schulenburg ... They didn't drink so little - even Stalin, having changed his dislike for outpourings on this more than a special occasion - but the hops did not take anyone - him completely ate away the tension.

Stalin, winking merrily with narrowed eyes and smiling into mustache,

suggested: - Let's drink to the new anti-Cominternist

Stalin! The Germans were dumbfounded, and Stalin winked ironically and clinked glasses

with Ribbentrop... There was laughter at the table - in fact, it often sounded now... But the table was very good, business was over, and not only the guests, but also the hosts again bent over the plates.

Suddenly Stalin picked up a glass, winked again and began new toast:

- I propose to drink to the health of our People's Commissar of Railways posts by Lazar Kaganovich!

Stalin got up from the table, went up to Kaganovich and clinked glasses with him. Ribbentrop also stood behind Stalin - also to clink glasses ...

This was the whole of Stalin - the "anti-Comintern" toast was a joke, the toast to the Jew Kaganovich was a completely serious hint that we know how to joke, but we do not refuse principles ...

Time at the end of the still short night at the end of summer flew by imperceptibly, but the dinner was still not friendly, but diplomatic, and it was time to say goodbye ... They

returned to the embassy noisily, in the best of spirits. Ribbentrop was animated, again spoke with enthusiasm about Stalin, about

that at the table he behaved like a good father of a family, about "people with strong faces" working with Stalin ... The next morning,

Ribbentrop, rubbing his eyes, saw from the window people staring at the residence of the Reich Minister, looking out of the windows of the British embassy.

- Who is this? he asked. — Members of the British and French military missions. - A! Yesterday I asked Stalin about them. - And what did he say? - He said that

they would politely say goodbye ... Ribbentrop was in a hurry to go home to report to the Fuhrer. And already at one o'clock in the afternoon both Condors headed

west. In a hurry, they forgot the Fuhrer's personal translator, Schmidt, who dropped into a restaurant at the airfield. Foolishly gazing after the two armored Condors, he almost lost heart when they shouted to him: "Run there! Now a spare car without passengers will take off for Berlin!

And Schmidt, perked up, rushed to the Ju-52, which had already started the engines at the far end of the airfield ... Approaching

Poland, the Junkers transport - unarmored - took a steep right, far into the sea ... - What's the matter? Schmidt

asked. - They can shoot down Polish anti-aircraft guns, and even fighters - evil the pilot smiled... - And we are not so important, we have no armor...

However, the Condor with the Reich Minister also made a big detour over the Baltic Sea. God saves man, who save himself. Especially when you have to deal with the Poles. The conclusion

of the Pact in the General Staff of the Ground Forces passed almost unnoticed - the hottest days were coming. On August 24, information came from Budapest about the intention of the Poles to enter Danzig in the second half of the 24th or in the morning of the 25th, and the Fuhrer at 1500 on August 25 ordered the start of hostilities at 0430 on August 26.

At 19.30 on the same 25th, he canceled the order, but the Abwehr saboteurs under the command of Lieutenant Gertsner, who were not notified of the cancellation, captured the Yablunkovsky pass in the tunnel area and held it for several hours.

But Hitler still hesitated ... It seemed that the reserves of a political solution had not yet been exhausted ... On the one hand, on August 25, Viscount Halifax and the Polish ambassador Count Raczynski signed an agreement on mutual assistance in London (in fact, on military guarantees to Poland).

And on August 25, General Franz Halder wrote in his official diary: **"England's intervention is absolutely obvious,"** and on the 26th - **"England's intervention is**

unconditional." Why did the Fuhrer temporarily cancel the invasion ... But England behaved in such a way that her intervention looked only possible. Goering and Dahlerus talked about this on the 25th and 26th, because the Germans wanted to clarify the situation through this

On August 25, Hitler spoke with the British ambassador in Berlin. Henderson and made an oral statement to him...

He said that his hopes for an understanding between Germany and England had not disappeared. Chamberlain and Halifax argue that Germany is striving to conquer the world, while the British Empire occupies 40 million square kilometers worldwide, Russia 19 million, America 9.5 million, and Germany less than 600,000. Who exactly is striving to conquer the world? the Fuhrer asked the ambassador.

And then he said: - The actual provocations of Poland are unbearable ...

It does not matter

who is guilty of this ... The problem of Danzig and the "Corridor" must be solved. But as far as England is concerned, after the liquidation of the German-Polish problem, I wish to take a step that would be as decisive as the one taken with regard to Russia ... I wish Anglo-German consent ... At the same time, I emphasize the final decision of Germany never again do not come into conflict with Russia. Henderson listened attentively, while Hitler continued: "If the British government takes these considerations into account, it will be good both for

Germany and for the British Empire." If she rejects these considerations, there will be war.

Henderson instinctively touched his mustache. Fuhrer ended his speech:

- Under no circumstances will Great Britain be able to come out of it stronger ... The last war proved this ... The British ambassador hurried to the embassy to

compile an urgent code, and then flew to London in the Fuhrer's private plane for consultations, which lasted until August 28 ... Requested London and Warsaw ... But they persisted there for reasons both previously explained by me and not explained by anyone or anything ... On the 28th at 17 o'clock Henderson flew to Berlin with a memorandum

English government. At 22.30 he handed it over to Hitler. After reviewing the translation of the text, he promised: - I expect to give an

answer on the same day. "I'm not in a hurry," the

Englishman reassured. "But I'm in a hurry," the

Fuhrer snapped. London behaved in 1939

with the Germans in almost the same way as on the eve of the outbreak of the First World War, that is, it pretended to be ready to go to the world ... But if at that time the ambassador of Kaiser Lichnowski succumbed to the provocation of the then British Foreign Minister Edward Grey, now Hitler was ready with England both for peace and for war ... Although he really hoped that the British would not go to disrupt peace because of Poland, which was gaining more and more "penalty" political points ...

However, sincerely or not, England offered new negotiations and mediation.

On August 29, Henderson was asked to arrive at the Imperial Chancellery by 6:45 p.m. Hitler personally handed him the answer, the essence of which was that Germany was ready for negotiations and was waiting for the Polish representative in Berlin on Wednesday 30 August. Everyone these days behaved more and

more nervously - the tension affected. The discussions already looked like skirmishes, and once Henderson almost slammed his fist on the table... Hitler could hardly restrain himself, but Ribbentrop intervened just in time with some question.

Regarding the short timeframe for the Poles' arrival, Henderson muttered, "That sounds like an

ultimatum. The term is short, and Warsaw is unlikely have time to prepare their proposals in a day.

"It's a ninety-minute flight from Warsaw to Berlin," Hitler replied. - I can not wait any longer. The army and navy are already ready

On the 25th... A week is already lost and they cannot lose another... Then the bad weather will work for the Poles. Hitler

could have added that Ambassador Lipsky was **already** in Berlin, and Beck had at least one hundred and fifty days to think over the situation - after all, Germany's main demands had been known to Poland since the end of March of this year! And he would be right! By the evening of

August 30, the Polish

representative had not arrived, although, as has just been said, Ambassador Lipsky was in Berlin all this time. But Henderson in the evening asked Ribbentrop to receive him at 23.00 to transmit the English reply. The answer boiled down to the fact that England offers the Germans to

start bilateral negotiations with the Poles. And England, they say, cannot recommend to the Polish government to accept the procedure proposed by Germany. Hitler had already explained to Henderson that close autumn fogs can disrupt the Reich's

military solution to the issue, and therefore a political decision must be made immediately, today. With this in mind, London's response looked mocking. This was clearly a delay in order to do exactly what Hitler wanted to avoid - the disruption of the entire Weiss plan to invade Poland.

Moreover, it was very likely that the delays of the British were coordinated with the Poles - Halder noted the presence of interceptions of Polish telephone conversations about delaying business ... And negotiations were underway with ... Paris. Telephone cables from Warsaw went there through the territory of ... Germany, so the interception service had no particular problems ... From Paris, everything went, of course, to London. Therefore, Ribbentrop, having learned

answer, flared

up: - We have been waiting for the Pole all day. Where is your Pole? Time is up! — We recommended the Poles to strive for restraint and we recommend this to

you... So, all the "mediation" of Britain was reduced to empty recommendations, instead of Henderson, on the orders of London, by the **ear** to lead Lipsky to Ribbentrop, under the threat of an immediate refusal of England from its obligations towards Poland.

And Ribbentrop was almost shouting:

"I can tell you, Herr Henderson, the situation is bloody serious! The ambassador raised his index finger and yelled, too: "You just said damn it!" This is not the word that should be used by a statesman in such a situation! Ribbentrop jumped up from his chair and growled: "What did you say?" The Englishman also jumped up... The situation reached a peak... And both sat down at the same time...

Ribbentrop took a piece of paper from his pocket:

- Here are our proposals to Poland ... He began to read slowly, explaining something along the way. Germany proposed the Anschluss of Danzig and a plebiscite on the territory of the "Corridor" under the international control of England, France, Italy and the USSR. May I have this paper? - After listening, the ambassador asked. — No, it is overdue, because the Polish representative is not came...

Soon Chamberlain will declare from the rostrum of the House of Commons that, supposedly, the German Foreign Minister did not give His Majesty's ambassador the opportunity to deal with the essence, but, firstly, it was a lie, and secondly, the paper was intended for Henderson, who was not present, but the absent Polish delegate. If there were a Pole, there would be paper. And if there is no Pole, then there is no paper ... However, even without paper, the Englishman understood the main thing correctly and already at 2 o'clock in the morning conveyed the essence to Ambassador Lipsky, recognizing it as "not too unacceptable" (yes!).

It all looked just disgusting, if you know what else 9 March 1939, the same Henderson wrote to Halifax in London:

"It seems inevitable that, in the course of time, Memel and Danzig, and perhaps even some other minor areas, will be reattached to the Reich on the basis of self-determination. The most we can hope for is that this will happen without saber-rattling, through constitutional or peaceful means. negotiations..."

We made the mistake of showing an inability and unwillingness to understand the true nature of Germany. However unpleasant it may be for us and for the rest of Europe, but Hitler's desire

to unite the Germans - whether they be Austrians or Sudeten Germans - in Greater Germany was not base ... This accession was nothing more than the fulfillment of an aspiration that never left the minds of all German thinkers for centuries.

And after that, Britain itself did everything during the spring and summer of 1939 to ensure that the constitutional path and the path of peace negotiations on an acute problem were closed to Germany.

And now, when the events he himself foresaw, the regularity of the goals of which for Germany he did not deny, broke out, the English "gentleman" played in offended ignorance and innocence ...

And instead of giving Lipsky a scolding at the suggestion of the same Halifax, he only squeezed out of himself: - I recommend your government to offer the Germans an immediate meeting between Marshal Rydz-Smigly and Goering...

Lipsky shrugged his shoulders... After all, he was sitting in the embassy like a mouse in a hole, having no authority from Warsaw to make any contacts with the German side in this "damningly serious" situation, let alone receive its proposals. It was not until shortly after

noon on August 31 that Lipsky was instructed to meet with Ribbentrop and report that the Polish government was "favorably considering the proposal for direct negotiations." But Lipsky did not receive the authority to negotiate. At 1300 Lipsky asked for an appointment with Ribbentrop. Secretary

of State Weizsäcker immediately asked: "Do you want to see the Reich Minister as special envoy?" "I

request an audience as an ambassador to convey my government's message. Actually,

after these words, everything became completely clear, but in

18.30 Ribbentrop Lipsky received. The Pole handed him a note.

You have the authority to negotiate with us now German proposals? - No.

"Well,

then there's no point in continuing this conversation...